



23RD RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION MEETING



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COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA – 09/19/2025

MEETING LOCATION

Friday, September 19, 9AM to 12PM in Taos Council Chambers - 120 Civic Plaza Dr, Taos, NM 87571.

MICROSOFT TEAMS CONFERENCING OPTION:

Link to join the meeting on-line: <https://bit.ly/RGTC23>

Meeting number (access code): 253 597 975 915 4

Meeting password: NE67Vi7G

CALL IN OPTION:

If you would like to join the meeting by telephone, please call: +1 505-312-4308 Toll Free.

When prompted, dial event number: 977 508 116#

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

During the meeting, please mute yourself unless you would like to speak. This will minimize background noise.

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes from 22nd Rio Grande Trail Commission meeting
 - > Attachment A: Meeting Minutes - June 13, 2025
5. Public Comment
6. New Business
 - a. Updates From the Chair (Chair Bajema)
 - b. Guest Speaker: Brad Higdon, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
 - c. Subcommittee Reports
 - i. Tribal Subcommittee (Commissioner Chacon)
 - > Attachment B: Report Back: RGTC Tribal Subcommittee
 1. Meetings with San Felipe Pueblo, San Ildefonso Pueblo
 - ii. Alignment Subcommittee (Commissioner Carter)
 - > Attachment C: Report Back: RGTC Alignment Subcommittee
 1. Trail Segment Prioritization
 - > Attachment D: Rio Grande Trail FY 25 Annual Report: County Summaries
2. New Trail Segment Considerations
 - a. Santa Fe County and Taos County connectivity: scope of engagement
 - > Attachment E: Scope of Engagement: Rio Grande Trail – Alignment Recommendation (Santa Fe County and Taos County Connection)
3. Trail Segment Designation
 - a. Horsethief Mesa Trail, Taos County
 - > Attachment F: Trail Segment Designation - Horsethief Mesa Trail
 - > Attachment G: Map of Horsethief Mesa Trail trail segment for designation
 - > Attachment H: BLM Letter of Support - Horsethief Mesa Trail
 - b. Camino Real: Santa Fe River to Camino de Rey Road
 - > Attachment I: Trail Segment Designation - Camino Real: Santa Fe River to Camino de Rey Rd
 - > Attachment J: Camino de Rey Trail Segment Map
 - > Attachment K: City of Santa Fe Letter of Support - Camino Real: Santa Fe River to Camino de Rey Rd
4. Trail Segment Updates, Taos County
 - a. Bridge to Bridge (BLM)
 - b. John Dunn (BLM)



- c. *Horsethief Connector (BLM)*
 - d. *Garrapata Canyon (USFS)*
- 5. **Administrative Documents**
 - a. **Revised Designation Application**
 - > *Attachment L: Trail Segment Designation Application*
 - b. **Revised Realignment Application**
 - > *Attachment M: Trail Segment Realignment Application*
 - c. **Revised Letter of Support**
 - > *Attachment N: Letter of Support Template*
- iii. **Legislative Subcommittee (Commissioner Davidson)**
 - 1. *Update on proposed legislation*
 - 2. *Status of Project Management Planning Initiative*
 - > *Attachment O: Program Management Plan presentation*
- iv. **Non-Profit Subcommittee (Commissioner Gross)**
 - > *Attachment P: Report Back: RGTC Non-Profit Subcommittee*
- v. **Proposal to use RGT Office funding to hire**
 - a contractor to move the NPO formation forward
 - > *Attachment Q: RGT NPO formation scope of work*
- d. **Miscellaneous**
 - i. **Signage Development**
 - > *Attachment R: RGT Signage Package*
 1. *Tribal engagement*
 2. *Signage languages*
 3. *Strategies for applying RGT signage to existing trail signs*
 4. *Interim low-cost signage strategy ideation*
- 7. **Announcement of Next Meetings**
 - a. *Fri, Jan 16, 2026 – Albuquerque*
 - b. *Fri, April 3, 2026 – Las Cruces*
- 8. **Public Comment**
- 9. **Adjournment**



ATTACHMENT A: MEETING MINUTES - JUNE 13TH, 2025



22nd Rio Grande Trail Commission Meeting – Minutes

Friday, June 13, 2025 // 9 AM – 12 PM

Wendell Chino Building - 1220 S St Francis Dr, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Commissioners Present, In-Person:

- Ben Bajema – OFS Senior Advisor, EMNRD (Chair)
- Dan Carter – Continental Divide Trail, Trail Mgmt.
- Howard Gross – HG Conservation Solutions, Public 1
- Karina Armijo – Outdoor Recreations Division Director, EDD
- Michael Chacon – Tribal Environmental Justice Specialist, IAD
- Myron Temchin – Temchin Environmental Planning, Public 2
- Shannon Glendenning – Urban & Regional Planner, DOT
- Steve Harris – Rio Grande Restoration, River Eco
- Toby Velasquez – SPD Division Director, SPD
- Tucker Davidson – Audubon Society, Bird Eco

Commissioners Present, Online:

- Novela Salazar - General Counsel, TD

1. Call to Order

Chair Bajema called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call

All Commissioners introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Agenda

Chair Bajema requested a motion to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Armijo made a motion.

Commissioner Temchin seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Temchin – YES

Commissioner Harris – YES

Commissioner Chacon – YES

Commissioner Gross – YES

Chair Bajema – YES

Commissioner Velasquez – YES

Commissioner Armijo – YES

Commissioner Davidson – YES

Commissioner Glendenning – YES

Commissioner Carter – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

4. Approval of Minutes from April 13, 2025, 21st Rio Grande Trail Commission Meeting

Chair Bajema requested a motion to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Harris made a motion.

Commissioner Velasquez seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Temchin – YES

Commissioner Harris – YES

Commissioner Chacon – YES

Commissioner Gross – YES

Chair Bajema – YES

Commissioner Velasquez – YES

Commissioner Armijo – YES

Commissioner Davidson – YES

Commissioner Glendenning – YES

Commissioner Carter – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

5. Public Comment

Chair Bajema requests that comments be kept to 2-3 minutes per person.

There was no public comment.

6. New Business

a. Updates from the Chair (Chair Bajema)

i. Creation of the Office of the Rio Grande Trail

Chair Bajema: We have successfully created the Office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission, which now lives in EMNRD and is staffed by me. We are working diligently to try to get some temporary support for these commission meeting logistics, because technically it is not within Pland's scope. They've been very gracious in helping us organize the logistics for these commission meetings. But we would like to move it towards something within the office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission. And of course, by creating the office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission, we have now been able to use the funds that were appropriated by the legislature. We have access to \$225,000, some of which we will use for hiring this temp administrative logistics coordinator. Some of it will be used for trail management workshops, some of it will be used for signage, and other things to move forward with developing segments of the trail that have been designated. And, of course, promotional material, like the bags that you see in the chairs. And second, I know we did this already very briefly, but we have a new commissioner on the Rio Grande Trail Commission. She is the general counsel for the tourism department, Novella Salazar. Novella, if you don't mind, giving a brief background, you have some relevant experience that I think you should share with the Commission. Thank you.

ii. Introduction of New Commissioner: Novella Salazar, New Mexico Tourism Department

Commissioner Salazar: Yes, thank you. Chair, as he stated, Commissioner Salazar, with the New Mexico Tourism Department. However, I started with the Attorney General's office. I did have some work on the Rio Grande compact at that time. I was also the division director for the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo division. So, I do have some work with special districts, such as acequias and land grants, as well as some work with tribal nations, and I'm excited to be part of this group. Thank you very much.

b. Developing Sub-Committees / Work Groups

i. Formalize Creation of Subcommittees

- Ben Bajema reads the proposed subcommittee purpose statements and opens the floor for discussion.
- Howard Gross and Myron Temchin suggest amendments to the mission statements, particularly for the Nonprofit subcommittee.
- Commissioners discuss the importance of cultural and environmental stewardship and the role of gateway communities.
- Carl Colonius emphasizes the need for subcommittees to review and revise the purpose statements.

Chair Bajema: Thank you, Commissioner Velasquez, so what I have in the nonprofit is I'm going to read this so we're cutting out long term framework two in the first sentence, and then also making an and then replacing that with NGO to a nonprofit organization too, and then adding into the last sentence cultural and environmental, per Commissioner Harris's comment. So let me just read that out, just so we're all on the same page here:

The nonprofit subcommittee was created to lead the development of a nonprofit organization to support the Rio Grande trail. This subcommittee will explore and recommend a sustainable organizational structure to help build capacity, coordinate resources, and ensure the trail's ongoing development, management, environmental, and cultural stewardship for years to come.

Chair Bajema: Let me read that last sentence one more time for everybody:

This subcommittee will explore and recommend a sustainable organizational structure to help build capacity, coordinate resources, and ensure the trail's ongoing development, management, and cultural and environmental stewardship for years to come.

Better. Do I have a motion?

Commissioner Carter: I noticed that the statement doesn't mention recreation or recreational stewardship in any capacity, which is a part of the Rio Grande Trail. Perhaps we add that adjective recreation, perhaps after environmental, so cultural, environmental, and recreational stewardship, or something to that effect. Or I welcome other suggestions.

Commissioner Gross: Maybe the word resource, environmental, cultural and recreation. Resource stewardship.

Chair Bajema: Is environmental and resource not redundant? Or what would resource be referring to?

Commissioner Gross: There are cultural resources, there are environmental resources.

Commissioner Temchin: Mr. Chair, an important part which we talked about last meeting, and which we'll probably talk about again today, is the development and support of gateway communities. And I think the concept of bringing the value propositions of the surrounding environment around our trail is an important incentive to the public, not only to bike and hike and run, but to see the remainder of New Mexico surrounding the trail. I'd like to see the work just for conversation to the other Commissioners, I'd like to see us get something about gateway community involvement into one of these four subcommittees. Thank you, Chair.

Chair Bajema: As a point of discussion for the commission, and maybe we can call up a special witness, Carl, to better inform us as to where gateway communities might reside within this subcommittee structure.

Carl Colonius: Thank you, Chair, yes, the gateway communities certainly would be an aspect that we would want to think about and incorporate into action items as the trail moves forward. For folks that are unfamiliar with gateway communities, thinking about a hub or a connection in a community that is close to the recreational asset. Long distance hikers refueling, you know, kind of taking a break from a trail, as well as communities that have trail systems in and around that network, into the Rio Grande trail. So I would suggest it is part of what the nonprofit should be thinking about. But just to zoom out for a second, the first line of this draft purpose statements is below our draft purpose statements for the various subcommittees. We hope to have each subcommittee review these and revise them as appropriate. I think the wordsmithing that we're embarking on might be longer than this meeting could embrace. Wordsmithing is hard, and the intention was to put these drafts in front of the subcommittees and have the subcommittees revise and formalize them in order to bring it back to the commission. Just a comment on the process.

Chair Bajema: Thank you, Carl, I think that I jumped the gun then, and we are actually the goal is to formalize the subcommittees and not necessarily formalize the missions of the subcommittees. Thank you for that clarification, and I apologize for the lapse in time of wordsmithing. So, I think with that, let's move to make a motion.

Chair Bajema: **If I can hear a motion on formalizing the four subcommittees, not necessarily their missions as written at present, but just formalizing the subcommittees as official subcommittees of this commission.**

Commissioner Davidson made a motion.

Commissioner Temchin and Gross seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Temchin – YES

Commissioner Harris – YES

Commissioner Chacon – YES

Commissioner Gross – YES

Chair Bajema – YES

Commissioner Velasquez – YES

Commissioner Armijo – YES

Commissioner Davidson – YES

Commissioner Glendenning – YES

Commissioner Carter – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

Commissioner Davidson: Mr. Chair, Commissioner Salazar?

Chair Bajema: Commissioner Salazar, since she's online, is a non-voting member of the commission today, unfortunately, but thank you. So, with that, we have formalized the four subcommittees under the Rio Grande Trail Commission. They have been meeting unofficially and doing some pre-work, and in this next section of the agenda, we're going to hear some updates from subcommittee leadership, starting first with Commissioner Chacon from the tribal engagement subcommittee.

c. Subcommittee Reports

i. Tribal (Commissioner Chacon)

1. Meetings with Pueblo of Santa Ana, Pueblo of Sandia (Alignment Concerns: NM 165: Camino de Tecolote to NM 536)

2. Scheduled meeting with Pueblo of San Felipe

3. Conversations about meeting with Pueblo of San Ildefonso, Santo Domingo Pueblo/Kewa

- Michael Chacon provides an update on the Tribal Engagement subcommittee's efforts to consult with various pueblos and tribes.
- Chacon highlights the importance of tribal consultation and the challenges faced in aligning the trail with tribal concerns.

- Chacon mentions ongoing efforts to set up meetings with Pueblo Santa Ana, Sandia, and San Ildefonso
- The subcommittee aims to ensure that the trail does not disrupt culturally sensitive sites and to work collaboratively with tribal leaders.

Commissioner Chacon: Thank you, Chair. I'll start by thanking Chair Bajema, the commission and our Pland partners for respecting the tribal consultation process and tribal sovereignty. If you know anything about the history of the Commission, the original iteration wasn't strong in that capacity. I think it made our job a little tougher, and I think we're making admirable progress. The goal, of course, is to inform and seek input from all of New Mexico's nations, pueblos, and tribes. The nations, pueblos, and tribes along the Rio have primacy over their reaches of the river, but all of the NPT is like to call them upstairs at Indian Affairs. They may have a lot of them have deep cultural and traditional ties to the Rio, and areas near the Rio. The current political boundaries don't necessarily mean a lot to the tribes. They may have done pilgrimages to certain spots over the centuries. If you look at the Paako Golf Club community, there's a Pueblo almost embedded in the golf community. So, we can't let ourselves be constrained by political boundaries. Thank you Chair, thank you commission. I think we're doing it right. I think we're following the intent of the State Tribal Collaboration Act and the spirit.

To get into particulars, we spoke with Pueblo Santa Ana. They have no desire to develop along the river. I think we hear that quite often, to keep the river the way it is, and they have plans on their own for there to be a wildlife corridor along their stretch of the Rio. We spoke with the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of Santa Ana. They have concerns. There is a proposed alignment of the trail along New Mexico 14, next to the Paako community. And this is news to me. I learned this is how I learned about the Paako Pueblo archeological site. I had not heard that before. But we're going as far as if a trail might be along 14, we'll be on the other side of the road. We want to give lots of space to sites like these, and also those proposals to maybe go along New Mexico 165 on the east side of the mountains. And unfortunately, that goes through traditional cultural properties, not within the current political boundaries of Sandia or Santa Ana, but both of those pueblos have great concerns with anything happening along New Mexico 165, so we are trying to move away from there. We also spoke with Pueblo Sandia, and they're also generally opposed to any trail development. They have issues that have caused great concern for them with trespassing and inappropriate use of the river by outsiders. You know, you can't really fence off the Rio. It may not be generally known that certain stretches of the river are, you know, under the primacy of Sandia Pueblo, and it's a cultural insult for them to see people frolicking, recreating in their river, which, you know, it's more for ceremonial, traditional purposes, and the hope if trail development occurs, it's further away from their land in the river. They

do not like the current alignment through Corrales and Rio Rancho, and they would like it further away from the land and the river.

After several attempts with the Pueblo of San Felipe, we've made several attempts to set a mutually workable date, and it looks like we're tentatively scheduled to meet on July 14. We're looking forward to that, and we reached out to Pueblo Pojoaque. Their first response is that they're happy to defer to the Pueblos that are able to participate. But Chair Bajema is going the extra mile, and we're still trying to set up a face-to-face to keep them informed. We've reached out to Pueblo San Ildefonso, and Lieutenant Governor Martinez of San Ildefonso is trying to set us up with their Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, and he's going to try and sit in also. Their traditional name essentially means where the river cuts through. This is a foundation of their very culture. And we want to listen very carefully to everything that you know, the Riverside tribes have to say. So I'm very much looking forward to of San Ildefonso. I was in their environment and Cultural Preservation Department for about 18 years. It's a fantastic culture, wonderful people, and looking forward to talking with them again. And we've reached out chair, if you'll remind me, where are we with Kewa? Where are we with Santa Domingo? In process. We're in the process with quite a few. So that's where we are currently. And again, thanks to everybody for your interest and understanding. And I really am. Very happy with the way this commission is approaching tribal collaboration. Thanks everybody.

Chair Bajema: Thank you, Commissioner Chacon, and obviously, we couldn't do without your leadership and expertise in the area, and making sure that we're doing it right, because that's important. Next, I'd like to go to Commissioner Carter to give us some updates from the alignment subcommittee.

ii. Alignment (Commissioner Carter)

1. Trail Segments to be Prioritized

2. Revised Designation Application

3. New Realignment Application

4. Letter of support template

5. New Trail Segments

a. Overall Process & Community Engagement

i. Designation Criteria

ii. Scope of Community Engagement

- Commissioner Carter provides an update on the Alignment subcommittee's efforts to review and revise proposed alignments.
- Carter discusses the need for an MOU to clarify responsibilities and the importance of stakeholder engagement.
- The subcommittee is working on revisiting alignments, particularly in the Middle Rio Grande area, to address community concerns.
- The alignment subcommittee is also considering the need for field trips to better understand proposed routes.

Commissioner Carter: Thank you. Chair. So, the alignment subcommittee, we've been meeting about every other week to review the proposed alignments in the master plan and also looking at some other revisions to those proposed alignments. So, as I mentioned in the previous discussion, a large part of the alignment subcommittee is just to review those proposals and do the outreach with the land managers or stakeholders, the tribes, the communities, to vet these proposals prior to coming to this commission for adoption. So, it's kind of a lot of back-and-forth, iterative work to make sure that all the pieces are in place and the legal structures are there, such as easements and support letters, and stuff like that. So, we're going to continue to review and revise that process, and in the next section, we will discuss the applications that we realized because of the lapse in Rio Grande Trail Commission meetings from 2022 until 2025 that actually was never formally approved. So, we'll be asking the full commission to review those applications and provide feedback. So, hopefully at the next September meeting, we can formally approve those applications moving forward and make sure that it's very clear what we're asking for designation. And then we will be getting to some applications or proposed sections for discussion in the next, in the previous, or in the following sections as well, as I mentioned, that was suggested for approval at the August 16, 2022, meeting, which never happened. And so, the latest meeting was in April of this year. So, just to kind of do a little bit of house cleaning, as we all know, taking a few years off can create some cobwebs in the corners. So again, we are also kind of looking at, and as we discussed, even at some of the field visits and some just, you know, outreach with the tribe and stuff, some of these routes that were in the master plan need to be revisited. Things have changed over the years, or maybe there just wasn't adequate engagement back when they were proposed. So, we're doing a lot of that cleanup to make sure that we can have an alignment that's going to work. And one other item, and this will kind of maybe go to the legislative discussion, but we've recognized that an MOU is really needed moving forward, just to clarify what this designation entails and the responsibilities of partners, just so we can have a more clear conversation with the land managers and the stakeholders as we move forward in the proposal for the Rio Grande Trail, because many of these designations will be overlapping

with the already existing trail. So, we want that to be really clear of like what that means. That's all I have, Chair.

Chair Bajema: Thank you so much, Commissioner Carter. Any questions, discussion topics?

Commissioner Gross: Two questions. One is, who else is on the committee, as we're all getting familiar with how, how we're operating, and the second is, when there are field trips, is there a way to put out an invitation to the other commission members that's seeing these sites as part of the excitement and joy of working on this on this commission?

Commissioner Carter: So, currently on the alignment subcommittee, we have myself as the chair, and then Samuel Jensen from DOT, Commissioner Glendenning from DOT, Carl Colonius, and the commission chair. That's the formal members, and then others come in as needed, per a specific alignment. Pland, Dan and Katrina, have weighed in of course, as the contractors. So we're still opening it up to other members, like we've reached out to some of our federal partners, the Forest Service and BLM, hopefully getting some of these key land managers and experts in trail development and land management to join the subcommittee. Unfortunately, the federal agencies are quite thin at the moment, so it's a big ask for them to add extra workload, but we are reaching out to others and hopefully finding specialists, or just community members, who can give local context of proposed routes. Especially, I think in the Middle Rio Grande area, it's an area where some more information would be helpful. And then up here, basically Albuquerque to Taos is an area that's complicated, and having a lot of input is going to be necessary. And to your point about the field trips, the only ones we've had so far have just been in relation to these commission meetings. But I like the idea of having some more if we have some opportunities to look at proposed routes. So, I think we should consider that in the future.

Chair Bajema: Thank you, Commissioner Carter. And just to add to that, we can't have quorum when we're not in a commission meeting or when it hasn't been substantially publicly announced, so the subcommittees have to remain five commissioners or less, and then all of the field trips unless they were, of course, open to the public as well, would have to be five commissioners or less to make sure that we're not hitting that quorum. But if you are interested in joining the alignment subcommittee, we would welcome your participation.

Commissioner Temchin: I live in Placitas, and I noticed that Commissioner Chacon mentioned in his communications with Santa Ana, which we also have a relationship with, the buffalo track NEPA process that's going on. There are five very active citizen organizations, and when we look at the map of the proposed detour away from the Rio

Grande River down the 165 to 14, there is a huge amount of community discussion going on, not only from the Pueblo and the tribes, Commissioner Chacon, but from the citizens of the community. And I would just like to be included in that discussion, since I'm a member of four of these five citizen organizations, and I feel I could bring some interesting conversation for the commission to understand what you're going to go through when we reroute away from the Rio Grande down 165. To give you an example of a major concern last night, Sandoval County published their final review of the community wildfire prevention plan. There was a huge amount of comment about that, as you probably understand, the latest evaluation in Placitas puts us at the highest level of risk relative to a wildfire. And so that needs to be considered if we're going to route our visitors on the trail through a neighborhood that's designated extreme high risk for wildfire. So, there's all these other factors. I just like to reiterate if you could contact me and let me introduce you to the heads of these organizations that represent the 3000 families that live in Placitas, not the Pueblos. I'd appreciate that opportunity. Thank you. Commissioner Carter,

Commissioner Carter: There are so many pieces that go into alignment and trail management. I'm going to defer to Dan and Pland if they want to add anything specific, they're the boots on the ground who have been doing this outreach and consolidating all this information and planning any future strategic meetings with community members on specific sections. So, yeah, we welcome all that input. We're just commissioners here, and they're doing the work on the ground. So if you want to add anything to that, go ahead.

Katrina Arndt: So, on that specific alignment, we had a lot of discussions on 165, and we heard a lot of concerns. And so, our recommendation was to potentially abandon that alignment, because there are so many concerns that exist with tribal communities specifically. And we had written to the forest ranger a memo stating that we didn't get a lot of feedback because there was turnover. But that was always our recommendation to abandon that and then think about a different alignment that better works with everyone and have the right stakeholders in the room when that happens. And so, I hear those concerns. I think they are shared by a lot of different stakeholder groups, and so that is what we experienced.

Commissioner Carter: Thank you, Katrina, yes, and that's I think we the alignment subcommittee concurs with that like, I know it was in the in the master plan, but it obviously needs to be that proposed route needs to be, like abandoned at this time, and go back to the drawing board and see what some alternatives might be with the appropriate stakeholders. So, thank you.

Commissioner Temchin: Just for clarification. So, 165 is out, and the committee is working on an alternate yet to be defined?

Chair Bajema: Just as a quick reminder, go through the chair when you're addressing the committee.

Katrina Arndt: The alignment committee is the place where we discuss these things. And then I would say that Commissioner Carter will make a recommendation to the commission, and then the Commission can vote on that. We can make recommendations to Commissioner Carter. We can work on figuring out what those arguments are, bring the history to him, but the alignment committee would be the one that makes that recommendation. I don't think we have discussed how that process will work, or whether Commissioner Carter will bring up that recommendation. We need to come up with a workflow of how we address existing alignments, future alignments, what the process is to get them to the alignment subcommittee, and then to the larger commission. We are all working through these processes right now, but I think this is a great example where we can maybe test how the process will work most cleanly.

Commissioner Temchin: Commissioner Carter, I sit on four boards in Placitas. What is the message we talk about this monthly, and many people are asking, what is the Rio Grande trail going to do to our community? Can you script some kind of statement as to when there'll be a formal discussion or decision about how the trail gets around the tribes adjacent to Bernalillo, how do we get over to Highway 14, or wherever we're going to go?

Commissioner Carter: We're revisiting all options. With this particular section, the section that was proposed in the master plan is not sufficient for all the reasons that we've discussed so far. And so we're looking at different proposed alignments. I propose a working session within this community with those stakeholders, is probably due at some point. That's something for us, the alignment subcommittee, to discuss afterwards and with Pland to see what our options might be. I don't have a timeline for that, but, yeah, I think that will be discussed in the future, and there's this isn't the only section that's going to be needing reviewed. So, yeah, we're just revisiting other options, and I think we'll reach out to stakeholders when it's available. To look at those.

Commissioner Temchin: Would it be okay for me to script the two-sentence summary of what you just said? So, when I report on what this Commission is doing, do I have your permission to use certain words?

Commissioner Carter: You can just refer to the minutes of this meeting. You're welcome to quote what's in the minutes of this meeting.

Commissioner Temchin: Thank you, Commissioner Carter.

Commissioner Velasquez: I just want to provide a little clarification and take the weight of the world off of Commissioner Carter's shoulders. He can't speak on behalf of the Commission in that way. He's a subcommittee chair. He's one element of a larger commission. And so, if there's going to be statements that the commission is going to make to groups, whether it's the groups that Commissioner Temchin or anyone else is making, it has to come from the commission as a whole, from a discussion, a deliberate process and approval of the commission, and then the outreach. So I think we're so far, we're putting too much pressure on a subcommittee chair that has no authority to speak on our behalf. In that way, if we want to develop a statement as a commission that can be used in general regarding the fact that we are revisiting alignments, and we'll have information to share in from future meetings. I think we can do that, and I think the chair can work on that independently, if we authorize him to do that as a commission. But, you know, developing comments from committee levels or anything like that that gives guidance or speaks on behalf of the commission, I think, is out of order. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Commissioner Temchin: Commissioner Chair, I'd like some clarification, and based on the recommendation from Commissioner Velasquez, what would be a response to the multiple citizens' associations and alliances that are actively looking at us in other areas, in development of recreation areas, the widening of Route 165 for a bicycle trail. The development of a Placitas wildfire recreation alliance where we would cut barriers and reroute roads. All of this activity is ongoing, so I would like to propose that you, as chair, develop a short, specific statement consistent with the governance and rules of this committee that could be released to the public if that's appropriate. Thank you.

Commissioner Velasquez: Commissioner Temchin, I believe you can make that in order of a motion, we can all approve that and give the authority to the Chairman to speak on our behalf in that way.

Commissioner Temchin: I make a motion that the Commission chair develop a short statement as to the current status of consideration of the Rio Grande trail alignment relative to its pathway near or around the Placitas community. Such statement would be acceptable for release to the public. Thank you.

Chair Bajema: Do I have a second?

Commissioner Velasquez: Second.

Chair Bajema: Any discussion on the motion? Hearing none, we'll go to Commissioner Temchin.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Temchin – YES

Commissioner Harris – YES

Commissioner Chacon – YES

Commissioner Gross – YES

Chair Bajema – YES

Commissioner Velasquez – YES

Commissioner Armijo – YES

Commissioner Davidson – YES

Commissioner Glendenning – YES

Commissioner Carter – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

Chair Bajema: I will work on drafting a statement for the Placitas community regarding the trail developments around that region. Thank you.

Commissioner Temchin: Thank you, from the people of Placitas, Commissioner.

Chair Bajema: Commissioner Carter, do you have any other comments from the alignment Subcommittee on any of the updated or newly proposed templates for the Commission's consideration?

Commissioner Carter: Chair, I do not have any. We'll get to those specifics in the next couple of sections.

Chair Bajema: We're going to move on to new trail segments.

Commissioner Carter: Just some clarification. It looks like the revised designation applications and realignment applications are next. Is that correct?

Chair Bajema: Did you want to go over those?

Commissioner Carter: I don't think we need to go into detail just again to bring it up, as I mentioned in the update, of just asking this commission to look at those, provide feedback, so we can get a finalized application for the next meeting.

Chair Bajema: Thank you. So just to clarify for everyone, Commissioner Carter, we want review feedback from the Commission and the public on these, on the letter of support template, the new realignment application template, and the revised designation application template, with the goal of formalizing those in our September meeting. Is that correct?

Commissioner Carter: Yes, this is correct, Chair.

Commissioner Temchin: Commissioner, Carter, how would you like to receive the comments?

Commissioner Carter: Commissioner, please send them to Dan in the back.

Chair Bajema: What needs to be done in Section Five of the agenda? The overall process and community engagement, designation, criteria, and scope of community engagement.

Katrina Arndt: We were talking internally because some of the new alignments have not gone through a public process, and so figuring out or discussing with the Commission what steps or what engagement commissioners would like to see us go through in terms of the public process and also in terms of what criteria we want to apply to identifying preferred alignments. The initial master plan has a list of criteria that they defer to and utilize to identify alignments. And as we all know, some of these alignments are not the best or not alignments that fit all stakeholders' needs, and we may want to revisit criteria as well as outreach practices, to chart a path where we include all stakeholders from the get-go.

Chair Bajema: Thank you. And it's my understanding that in the 2018 master plan, there were a lot of community workshops and engagement. Are you suggesting something potentially similar to that on specific designation portions that we want to revisit?

Katrina Arndt: I think that would depend on whether we utilize existing trails. I think the public engagement may look a little different versus if we look at new virgin areas that have no trail on them. I think that is something we want to discuss and just see what the appetite is, what kind of outreach is seen as sufficient. We do have to consider that outreach takes a lot of resources and make decisions that make sense. But, the 2018 Master Plan neglected sufficient tribal outreach, specifically. So, we do want to keep that in mind and engage the right stakeholders sufficiently.

Chair Bajema: Thank you. I think that a good use of the Rio Grande, the Office of the Rio Grande, trail commission, those funds could be, could be used for some sort of outreach, like you're describing, specifically with tribal leadership. I'd like to open it up to the commission. If anybody has any thoughts on this, you know, some new criteria for designating and proposing trail, and also for an outreach strategy different than what we've done up to this point.

Commissioner Temchin: I can only give you an example in Placitas in the development of the buffalo tract, thanks to New Mexico Econ. Dev., thanks to Mr. Colonius and Team, we got a grant, and part of the NEPA process was to develop a travel, transportation, and management plan, which takes you to the trail, not the trail itself. There's a lot of localized community in Placitas. There's a distant community called Mustang Mesa. There are lots of wild horses up there. They're very active right now in putting gates on what they consider private neighborhood roads. And so, I think in certain areas, and I don't know where it may be appropriate to talk, not just about the trail. How do you get to the trail? Where do you park your car? Is the trail strictly for hiking, biking, or bicycling, or some other use, or some shared use. And so I would just can ask you that if you consider, in the access through well-developed communities, it may be in your best interest to have some kind of community outreach meeting where people understand there's not going to be busloads of people driving in front of my house. I mean, those are the types of scenarios we're hearing now, which is not true, but it's still a fact that needs to be addressed. Thank you.

Commissioner Glendenning: Maybe we take a step back and think about the vision that we're working towards before we start establishing more criteria. So, I think the original mission statement was from like an evening walk to a multi-day hike that can take you across the entire state. We're having talks about different segments that connect you to the river, not along the river. So maybe it's just part of like that, that revisioning, but like taking a hard look at that, and that can inform a lot of these discussions as we move forward. And what does the trail want to look like in 50 years? This is a long-term infrastructure plan, so it's a 50-year plan,

Chair Bajema: A 100-year plan.

Commissioner Carter: I think each section, in each community, in each part of the state, is going to be much different, potentially. So, we'll have, I think we can have, we'll have general criteria based on, like this vision of the Rio Grande trail, but I think each segment and community might be a different scenario with different people. So, we'll have to be a bit flexible, I think, in that regard, as far as how we approach it and how much outreach we need and how many routes we might consider.

Chair Bajema: Any other points of discussion on this topic? All right, hearing none, I'd like to move to Section Six of the agenda, which is the trail segment designation. And with that, I'd like to pass it back to Commissioner Carter to introduce these sections and walk us through what we're thinking here. Thank you. Chair.

Commissioner Carter: Maybe I misunderstood earlier. But Dan (Majewski), do you want to walk us through these applications?

6. Trail Segment Designations

a. Camino Real: Santa Fe River to Camino de Rey Road

Dan Majewski: The first section we're looking at today, because we're here in Santa Fe County, we wanted to put together a proposal for something in Santa Fe County. So there was a lot of discussion about this particular section and just about the Rio Grande trail in Santa Fe County in general. There was an initial alignment that we were looking to designate that went through the Caja Del Rio. In meeting with stakeholders, we stepped back on that. The big reason for that is because it was a one-way dead-end segment that ended at tribal land, and so there wasn't a clear way of figuring out how that trail would continue further north. So, we came up with an alternative that we think will work well with future planned trail efforts. The alternative we came up with is along Caja Del Rio road. It is a paved trail. I am wondering if our representative from Santa Fe County may be interested in sharing a little bit more about this trail, since you're more of an expert on it, thank you, if that's okay with you, Chair.

Adeline Murthy: Thanks, Dan. Chair, commissioners, my name is Adeline Murphy. I'm the open space and trails planner with Santa Fe County. The proposed section is a little bit over three miles. It's paved. It stretches from the [Santa Fe] River Trail to the city of Santa Fe's municipal recreation complex. It is maintained by the county, and the trail on the north side also connects to trail networks that go into the Caja Del Rio and to Diablo Canyon, so it could potentially serve as a connector. The river trail connection to the south is also an important connection point. The [Santa Fe] River Trail is one of the county's and city's long-term trail projects, and we are currently in the process of constructing the trail. A lot of it is done, and the rest will likely be completed in about five or six years. Another important thing to note is that much of this alignment is along the historic El Camino Real trail, and I think that covers it.

Dan Majewski: It's always better to hear from folks who are here in the community. That's the essence of it. Commissioners, you have the full application in your packet that has more context about the trail as well. I'll let you all open this up for discussion.

Commissioner Carter: Thank you, Dan and Adeline, for the presentation there. As a matter of process, we do recognize that this section currently doesn't have the letters of support from the existing land managers, City of Santa Fe, the Santa Fe County. Also, it is along the Camino Real National Historic Trail, which is managed by the National Park Service. But we thought it would be a good example to bring up at this meeting as to how we are revisiting alignments and being flexible and changing that master plan and reconsidering new alignments in different ways. So, recognizing there's still some discussion with those managers and stakeholders to like, I think formally make this work. But thought it was be, it was applicable to bring this up here, since we're in Santa Fe, and also that this is a refinement of the process as we move forward.

Chair Bajema: If I can add Commissioner Carter, this is a refinement of the process based on stakeholder feedback. So that's an important thing to know in this alignment as well.

Commissioner Gross: Chair, where would future segments of this trail to the south go? The maps are helpful, but they don't show it beyond the Camino Real trailhead.

Chair Bajema: I'll take a stab at this, but I'm sure Dan and Commissioner Carter have more to add to this. The goal is to connect this segment of trail up and around Santa Fe, through the National Forest, potentially, and to Taos, is the ultimate goal. And I think that we would also like to support the city of Santa Fe in building out their efforts to, you know, make a more robust river trail that would also feed into the future Rio Grande trail alignment. Mr. Colonious.

Carl Colonious: It was identified that the Master Plan segment, or the alignment in this section, did take you to the river, but there was no means of crossing the river. And if you did cross the river, you were in sovereign land, and we certainly didn't have permission to extend it at that point. The original master plan, they left scratching their heads. So pulling back from that, the alignment that uses the Santa Fe River Trail as a draft. And again, part of the process that we're talking about here is taking that back out to community input in order to fully vet, get the local expert opinions on that proposed change of alignment. And just to talk a little bit about the workflow between the subcommittees and Pland Collaborative and the Outdoor Recreation Division, I don't want to open up the fire hose of tasks that come from subcommittees to plan to that have reasonable capacity, but we don't want to overwhelm that scope of work. So, talking about how that workflow happens is an important acknowledgement. And as an example, the tribal subcommittee had a

conversation with Sandia Pueblo. Sandia Pueblo identified some sensitivity around some alignment boom, the tribal subcommittee makes a reference or sends an email to the alignment committee. The alignment committee picks up that conversation, engages with Pland, with acknowledgement of the outdoor recreation division that some community outreach and a conversation needs to be convened. We convene that conversation, draw the information out, and bring a recommendation back to the full commission. Maybe it's in a designation, maybe it's in a realignment, but looking at how those gears fit together is an important step for the commission and for the community, and again, I strongly encourage the community to engage in the subcommittee structures. It's a great opportunity to, you know, kind of have your voice more readily available, and sit at the table to help make these recommendations back to the commission. So, the alignment that we are considering adding to the master plan would be routing on the Santa Fe [River] Trail, moving up through Santa Fe, which should be a benefit to the city of Santa Fe. They've got that trail concept and a lot of it on the ground already. And then we can move into the Santa Fe National Forest to move around the sovereign land that, if you think about it from Buckman through Espanola, you're not going to be able to avoid sovereign land unless major deviation, either to the west or to the east. So path of least resistance using the Santa Fe Trail to get up into the Santa Fe National Forest, Santa Fe National Forest, moving up into the Carson National Forest. And then there's connectivity into the Bureau of Land Management, Taos field office land, connecting into the Taos Valley overlook, Rift Valley Trail System, and further north from there. So, it's connecting the dots, plugging the pieces together, and stepping back from the master plan, that is not written in stone. It's not even written in pen. I would suggest it's written in chalk, which is pretty easy to erase. So, the workflow is a great kind of concept that we want, and I want to appreciate Myron. We're going to hear about this kind of collaborative organizational structure as let's put the pieces on a piece of paper and see how they play. I know that kind of went wildly beyond the question, there

Commissioner Carter: Thank you, Carl. And I think revisiting that workflow is something we should do in a future alignment subcommittee. Speaking of the tribal lands, we're talking about lands currently managed by the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, but these are native lands, and there are connections there. So still, even on these, like federal public lands, that outreach is still needed, and there are still sites there, and they hold strong significance as well. Just because it might be managed by a different agency, there's still a relationship there, and we need to honor that and keep that outreach going, even on these currently non-sovereign lands.

Chair Bajema: So, what I'm hearing is that this Six A segment is not ready for designation today, or should we go to a motion for designation?

Commissioner Carter: Chair, I don't think it's necessary to go forward with the motion for designation today. We recognize, in the last meeting, and this meeting, that as a matter of process, we want to make sure we have all that documentation before we move forward. Based on the field visit yesterday, there's still some discussion with stakeholders that we should have before we designate this. It's a good example of the process as we move forward. So hopefully in a future meeting, we can consider this.

b. Cebolla Mesa, Taos

Chair Bajema: I'd like to move to 6B, the designation of the Cebolla Mesa trail in Taos.

Dan Majewski: So, this particular section of trail should be familiar to the commission. This was on our last agenda at the last commission meeting. The discussion was centered around the fact that there were no letters of support for this section of trail. Just to quickly review, this is a section of existing trail in the National Forest. This is north of Taos, and it's just south of an existing designated section of trail through the Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument. So, you'll see in your packet that we do have, in writing, support from Amy at the National Forest Service. She sent us a message saying she approves of it. You can see that we wanted to use this to model how the letter of support format could work. As Dan Carter said, we want to get your review on this format before final approval. And you'll see there's also a reference to the Mayor of Questa wanting to be involved in the conversation, and we have been told that he was involved in the conversation. And I don't know if there are any commissioners who want to speak to that.

Commissioner Armijo: Yes, chair. I spoke with the Mayor of Questa a couple of weeks ago just to make sure that this was on his radar, and he understood, and this is part of the conversation that we're having. This master plan was done in 2018. He had heard about it through different points of outreach through the years, whether it was the Uplift project that ORD was involved with, or other ways that outreach happened in that area. But a mayor in Questa has a lot going on, so even that touch point of calling him and letting him know that this was on the agenda, he was very supportive of that. So, it's just a reminder that since 2018, a lot has happened, and outreach needs to keep going in different ways. So, he very much approves, is excited, and definitely welcomes outdoor recreation in that area.

Dan Majewski: Thank you, Commissioner Armijo. So, with that, I will open this up for discussion within the Commission. Thank you.

Commissioner Glendenning: Mr. Chair, I just want to thank everybody for once, we tabled this last meeting, bringing it back, and spending the time to get the support. I think it's going to really help the process, and this is great.

Chair Bajema: Any other notes or discussion on this segment? All right, hearing none. **Do I have a motion for approval for designating this section of the Cebolla Mesa Trail in Taos as part of the Rio Grande Trail?**

Commissioner Harris: So move.

Commissioner Velasquez: Second.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Temchin – YES

Commissioner Harris – YES

Commissioner Chacon – YES

Commissioner Gross – YES

Chair Bajema – YES

Commissioner Velasquez – YES

Commissioner Armijo – YES

Commissioner Davidson – YES

Commissioner Glendenning – YES

Commissioner Carter – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

Chair Bajema: Fantastic. With that, **we have officially designated the Cebolla Mesa Trail as part of the Rio Grande trail.** Congratulations, everyone. Good job. And just as a process, reminder, so the commission has now designated this, but by designating, we bring this segment of trail to the Secretary of EMNRD for official designation as part of the state trail system. And so that will entail a public meeting held in Taos for official designation as part of the state trail system. And then from that point forward, we can start doing signage or any other sort of maintenance and construction that is necessary. Fantastic. Next, I'd like to move to Section 6C of the agenda. This is also a segment of trail

that was tabled at the last Commission's meeting. It is County Road A005, in Truth or Consequences, and I'd like to pass it back over to Dan just to give us some updates on how that's progressed since our April meeting.

c. A005, Truth or Consequences

Dan Majewski: So, as the Chair noted, this should also be a familiar section of trail. At the last meeting, there were requests from the Commission to get some more letters of support, more written evidence of support about this trail, which we were able to get. So, first, included in your agenda is the support from the city of Truth or Consequences. In there, you can see the section from their commission meeting, the city's commission meeting, where they discussed and approved designating that section of trail. Following that in your packet, you'll see a signed resolution from Sierra County, which is where this trail is located. So, there is full support from Sierra County. And then following that, also modeling the letter of support template, we have some additional context from Amber Vaughn, who is the Sierra County Manager. There were a couple of emails that she sent that clarified that there were no existing easements recorded, and the vehicle count per day. And I did want to just point out and emphasize the description of how they're collecting that data. So, they're estimates. I just wanted to be clear about that, because based on our observations when we were out there, this seemed like a slightly higher number than we expected. So, I just wanted to point that out to everyone.

Chair Bajema: Dan, I think that "slight" is an understatement. We saw one bicycle during the time that we were out there, which does not indicate that there is a daily usage of 400 vehicles per day.

Commissioner Carter: Thanks for noting that about the counts. It also jumped out at me, and it does mention that that was through GPS enabled mobile devices, also known as cell phones. So, I'm curious if that might include recreational use, because a lot of recreationists use their cell phones to track their recreating so I'm really curious if that actually might be inflated because of the recreational use.

Dan Majewski: Thank you, Commissioner Carter, for that comment. I think that's a pretty good guess. So, with that, that's all the additional information we have about the segment. Now, we'll open it up for discussion among the commission. Applause,

Commissioner Temchin: I wanted to make a note for usage. There's a publicly available website called trails fork, and when you go to trails fork, you can dial in the county the trail, and believe it or not, they have a usage meter on every trail, and they have a subdivision of what the usage was about, biking, hiking, walking, jogging, horseback riding. So, you may be able to find some usage information to support this in 15 minutes by going to all trails or

trails fork, either of those have publicly recorded usage. Now, is it valid or not? That's another story, but it may support what you think. It may be a piece of an independent third-party record. So just to offer that source, Dan, thank you.

Commissioner Carter: I think it's probably mentioned in here, but as some of us got to see at the last commission meeting on the field trip, this connects over to Rotary Park, where they have a proposed pedestrian bridge that will connect the city over to this section of the trail and some BLM public land. So, there's already some future development in the works of connecting this directly into the community as well.

Chair Bajema: And to that point, Commissioner Carter, I think that the designation of this trail will accelerate the development of that bridge. All right, any other, any other comment from the Commission on this segment of trail? All right, hearing none. **Do I have a motion to approve the designation of A005 County Road in Truth or Consequences?**

Commissioner Carter: I motion to approve.

Commissioner Velasquez: Second.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Temchin – YES

Commissioner Harris – YES

Commissioner Chacon – YES

Commissioner Gross – YES

Chair Bajema – YES

Commissioner Velasquez – YES

Commissioner Armijo – YES

Commissioner Davidson – YES

Commissioner Glendenning – YES

Commissioner Carter – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

Chair Bajema: And with that, **we have adopted this segment of trail into the Rio Grande Trail.** Thank you to Pland for doing your due diligence and really responding strongly to the Commission's request for more information. And I think that the additional information you provided really strengthened the recommendation. Next, we'd like to move to a new

segment of trail. This is Section 6D of the agenda, Socorro Valley Bosque Trail, and I'd like to pass it to Katrina to talk us through this segment.

d. Socorro Valley Bosque Trail

Katrina Arndt: Thank you. Chair. So, this trail segment has been in discussion for a long time. We have been working with the city of Socorro and with their trail organizations on projects along within that area. There was always a barrier because of MRGCD's MOU with them, but they just signed a new MOU with MRGCD to allow the use of this trail. And so this trail is a three-mile trail along the river. It also connects into a larger network of trails and is utilized a lot by the community. They have a few parks along this trail that the community uses, and it also serves to give river access for river use. So, there's a lot of history with this trail, even though it's just now being brought to the commission, but I'm personally very excited. There are a lot of stakeholders involved from the community who utilize trails and also bring a lot of events to the Socorro area for trail use. So, the city of Socorro has recognized recreation as an asset for them, and they are trying to develop it for their purposes and to develop their local industries. I wanted to provide a little bit of history, because there has been a lot of work that we have been doing over the last three years with the community. There was a lot of discussion prior to this, so I wanted to highlight that.

Dan Majewski: Thank you, Katrina. So yes, what you will find here in the packet, you'll find quite a bit of support for the trail. The first piece of support that you'll find is a signed letter of support from the city of Socorro. So, it says in here that they both support it and that they are going to continue being responsible for this section of trail, because that is often a question that comes up when we're designating, who's going to be responsible for it, so they've noted their continued support for doing so. The next attachment you'll find is an MRGCD license agreement. This is something that will get into more detail on, I think, in the next section of the meeting when we talk about legislative updates, but essentially, it shows that MRGCD is very much in support. And to build on that, the last attachment is a signed letter of support from MRGCD themselves. It summarizes that they support designating this section of trail. And so, with that, I will hand it back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Carter: Thanks, Dan. I'm curious, are y'all familiar with these parks that it connects? I think that's a cool feature. What happens in these parks? What kind of infrastructure do they add to the trail, and what goes on there?

Katrina Arndt: There are, I think, seven parks. Some of those parks are utilized a lot. Others are not. So, the city has also strategies to decommission some of them and focus more energy on others. They are mainly used for day-use activities. They have fire pits, which I

don't know whether that's the best idea, but people are pretty responsible. There is one at one end of the trail that also allows camping. So that is, I think, awesome, because if we look at long-distance usage of the trail, we do need camping facilities. So, there's on one end where camping is allowed, and then some of them are used to access the river. They have some issues with illegal dumping, and so the city is trying to address that. I think if we get more people on the trail, that may discourage or eliminate some of those issues, but the city is working actively on improving some of them and decommissioning some of them to address some of the dumping issues.

Commissioner Carter: So, there is some infrastructure at some of the parks.

Katrina Arndt: I can circulate some more images if the commission is interested. They have benches, fire pits, tables, and trash receptacles. That was also where the city was trying to identify areas where they could have trash receptacles that are emptied more often. They're actively working on addressing either improvement or decommissioning.

Chair Bajema: Are they granting an easement or a right of way to EMNRD that includes the parks?

Katrina Arndt: The MOU they have with MRGCD includes the parks. So, all those uses have been happening for quite a while. I don't know how long this agreement has existed, but MRGCD provides some funding to the city to help maintain that area. But the city has been maintaining them for a while, including the trail.

Commissioner Harris: Is this utilizing the levee road system?

Katrina Arndt: No, it's soft surface trails. They're mainly utilized by walking and also mountain biking. I don't think they're accessible. Some of them are pretty flat, but on some of them you have to get over the levee road, so, like, over a bump to access the trail.

Commissioner Harris: So, this is within the levee, then.

Katrina Arndt: It is adjacent to the levee.

Chair Bajema: But not within the levee, it's on the outside.

Katrina Arndt: Yes.

Commissioner Davidson: Mr. Chair, it does look, from the map, that it does run along the levee road on the southern section. I know that northern section kind of winds through the Bosque. That southern section looks like it does follow the levee road, adjacent to the low flow channel.

Katrina Arndt: I'm not 100% familiar with all the segments of the trail. I've walked some of it, but it is an existing trail. It looks like yes, you're right.

Commissioner Chacon: Mr. Chair, Katrina, I've noticed under accessibility, the second sentence states to trail is gravel and sometimes inaccessible. Do we know what that means? Why is it inaccessible?

Katrina Arndt: I think the inaccessible refers to it not being ADA compliant. I think the levee road portion would be more accessible, but it does go down into the bosque with the trail meandering around. I don't think that it is ADA accessible.

Chair Bajema: Commissioner Chacon, the way that I interpret it, in addition to what you just mentioned, is that it would be hard to roll a wheelchair on a gravel segment where there are inclines and declines, and so I think that is the intention of what's written in that segment. Please correct me if I'm wrong.

Dan Majewski: Yes, that is correct, and this is a good opportunity to give another plug to the revised designation application, which helps to clarify these types of things through a checkbox-type format. It should be a little bit easier to understand. But yes, when we say accessibility, we don't mean that you can't physically access it. It's a reference to wheelchair accessibility.

Chair Bajema: Any other comments from the Commission on this segment of trail? Hearing none, **do I have a motion for designation?**

Commissioner Gross: So move.

Commissioner Temchin: Second

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Temchin – YES

Commissioner Harris – YES

Commissioner Chacon – YES

Commissioner Gross – YES

Chair Bajema – YES

Commissioner Velasquez – YES

Commissioner Armijo – YES

Commissioner Davidson – YES

Commissioner Glendenning – YES

Commissioner Carter – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

Chair Bajema: **The motion passes.** We have designated a third segment of trail to the Rio Grande Trail Commission. That concludes our trail segment designation portion of the agenda. Next, I'd like to turn to Commissioner Davidson to walk us through the legislative subcommittee updates.

iii. Legislative (Commissioner Davidson)

1. 2026 Legislative Proposal Development: Amending the Rio Grande Trail Commission Act to release liability for special district for public usage of trail hosted on their land.

2. Meetings with MRGCD; EBID; legislators

Commissioner Davidson: Yeah, so the legislative subcommittee we've been working mostly, as chair Bajema said earlier on, limiting liability or clarifying liability for the special irrigation districts, particularly MRGCD and Elephant Butte Irrigation District. We've got about 150 plus miles on that land, so it's good that we limit liability for these districts. Our strategy for it is to amend a statute in the New Mexico State Trails Act. It's really just one line. The state trails act already says no person or corporation or their successors and interest who has granted a right of way or easement across his land to the mineral energy minerals and Natural Resources Department for use in the state trail system, shall be liable to any user of the trail for injuries suffered on the right of way or easement unless the injuries are caused by the will for wanton misconduct of the grantor. All we're doing is basically adding right after person or corporation, saying or political subdivision or special district of the state, including irrigation and Conservancy District. So, it's a pretty simple amendment. We have been talking with MRGCD and Elephant Butte Irrigation District. They do have some concerns about liability. I think MRGCD has gone bankrupt five times in the past 18 years. So, we think it's a necessary step. We've also been talking to Senator Brantley and Representative Kathleen Cates, two co-sponsors of this amendment, to bring to the floor. Chair Bajema also talked to Juliana Coob Recently, who represents the trial attorneys so people that have interest in these injury cases, and Juliana Coob was under the impression that MRGCD is already kind of waived, or like limited liability under the tort claims act. So, this would double down on that and provide some extra protection for them. And so, yeah, that's, that's kind of where we're at right now. So really wanted to get

approval from the rest of the commissioners on this plan of attack or the strategy moving forward.

Chair Bajema: Commissioner Davidson, that was a great overview. If I can just add a just a little more color, we are not trying to enhance the limits of liability for anyone. We are not trying to change who is liable. We are merely trying to clarify that when a special district grants an easement or a right of way to EMNRD to be designated as part of the state trail system, that they are also allowed to receive those limits on their liability, except for the willful or wanton misconduct of that special district. So, if there is gross negligence, there is still a pathway for the injured individual to pursue legal action. But per the state trails act, there is a liable entity, that being the secretary of EMNRD, who would oversee, per the state trails Act, the management, maintenance, and policing of state trail systems. So we just want to make that clear, and we see it as a really critical step to get special district buy in and participation in this process, because, as Commissioner Davidson mentioned, there's hundreds of miles of trail that have been proposed on special district controlled lands, and if they are not able to participate in this process, and the trail has to deviate substantially from the Rio Grande River across hundreds of miles, I think we have a bigger problem on our hands. So, for this effort to move forward, we see this as a critical step, and we would love the Commission's support on this initiative. One other note of context for kind of the logistics of all this. EMNRD has submitted our proposed legislative ideas to the governor's office on June 1. We are eagerly awaiting feedback on those proposed legislative items, one of them being the clarification of this amendment in the state trails act. So, if there's any other discussion from the Commission, any clarifying questions?

Commissioner Glendenning: The question that's come up a couple of times in today's meeting was granting an easement to EMNRD for use of the trail. What exactly is the easement for?

Chair Bajema: To designate something as part of the state trail system, which, as I read the legislation, the Rio Grande trail ultimately will be a State Trail, the owner entity of the portion of trail that will be designated must designate a right of way or an easement to EMNRD for use of that segment, as I understand the legislation.

Commissioner Glendenning: That includes maintenance? But the land management agency or owners are doing the maintenance, right? It's just for the designation? What else comes with that?

Chair Bajema: If I understand your question correctly, once a segment of trail becomes part of the state trail system. Per the State Trail Act, the Secretary of EMNRD now oversees, manages, and maintains all segments of the state trail system.

Commissioner Carter: That sounds like it creates a lot of additional work for EMNRD. I'm curious if it's been considered that the added responsibility of the secretary could also be addressed through the current land manager, through something like an interagency MOU that maybe the legislative subcommittee could address at some point.

Chair Bajema: Yes, that's my understanding as well, that the current land manager, through an MOU, can take over those responsibilities of management that the Secretary is granted per the state trails act. Yes, sir.

Commissioner Armijo: I'd like to ask Carl, because I know that ORD has been dealing with this for the last couple of years. If you have any comments or concerns about this legislation.

Carl Colonius: Yeah, this is a sticky wicket. Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, Elephant Butte have concerns about their liability. How we attempt to adjust legislation in order to address those concerns, this is a strategy. We also have the recreational use statute, which is another, you know, kind of state statute that provides release of liability. If a landowner provides free and open access to their land and allows a trail to cross their land, they are relieved from liability. That legislation doesn't specify management entities like the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and in a lawsuit, let's say the 2002 Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District lost a claim. They attempted to use the recreational use statute as their defense, and the state Supreme Court provided some recommendations on adjustments to the recreational use statute. That is just another layer of protection for these entities. I will note that CEO Jason Casuga of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, his letter of support for the Socorro segment, the last paragraph reads, we will continue to evaluate each section of proposed Rio Grande trail within the middle Valley on a case-by-case basis. In this instance, we support the development of the Socorro Valley Bosque trail consistent with the terms of our existing license agreement with the city of Socorro to quote, install and maintain five riverine parks and a trail within the Rio Grande Bosque right of way owned by Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and urge all relevant agencies, partners and funders, to prioritize its advancement as part of the Rio Grande trail. So that three-mile section? Cool. They've got a license agreement. They understand that there's going to be some management and some maintenance of that. It's not really their levee Road, per se. It aligns with that, but it's a trail standing outside of their levee roads. I think the question comes up, how enthusiastic is the Middle Rio Grande conservancies district to the adjustments we're making to the state trails act, and does that allow us to then request utilization of those levee roads? And, you know, have we had those conversations with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District? Do we have a gauge of their enthusiasm? Or are we going to continue to look at it on a segment-by-segment

basis? I would love to think that with the adjustment of some legislation and lifting some heavy stones, MRGCD would say, cool. Here's the levee road alignment that we think would work for the Rio Grande trail, and with one administrative action, we gain 130-plus miles. That would be great. That would justify the amount of effort that Commissioner Davidson and the legislative committee is going through. So, I just wanted to kind of put this in perspective. I think it is a strategy, and I'm interested in how MRGCD is engaging in that discussion.

Chair Bajema: Absolutely. Thank you, Mr. Colonious. We've had a meeting with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and their lawyers as well. And they expressed, as Commissioner Davidson alluded to, that they are very concerned about the liability issues, and they feel like they are not significantly or sufficiently protected against claimants coming against them. And at present, a lot of their land is not for recreational use, but even if somebody gets hurt while recreating, they still have a pathway, and have been very successful suing the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. So I think, from what we heard in our discussions with them, is that they are very supportive of this effort, and the goal of it is what you described of getting to a clear point where we can designate a much larger segment of levee Road, as opposed to, you know, three miles of trail outside of the levee road. I wanted to come back to for a little historical context on some prior legislation that you mentioned, which is the recreational use statute, which I believe falls under Game and Fish, if I'm not mistaken. That piece of legislation was attempted to be amended last year or in this past long session, and they were trying to do what we are trying to do, just adding in special districts pursuant of NMSA, 17, whatever, 1758, or something. And that legislation did not come to pass because, from the trial attorneys' perspective, they said this is unnecessary. The special districts already benefit from vast immunity under the Tort Claims Act, especially in the instance of designating an easement or a right of way to EMNRD for the purposes of recreation. So, what we're doing instead is to amend the state trails act, just to clarify that immunity exists, and still giving claimants a voice and a path forward in the courts to right wrongs. If there are other avenues or if legislation is not required, or if there are other better statutes that should be amended, I think we would really welcome that opportunity to review and look at those, because we want to put all of our efforts into the highest likely win scenario to get special district involvement in the designation process. One other question I had was, what's the difference between a license agreement and an MOU? I'm seeing that difference in language, and I was wondering if there is a substantial difference legally for the management of these potential segments.

Carl Colonius: Mr. Chair, I could take a whack at that the license agreement that we're seeing referred to in Mr. Cayuga letter is specific to a process for Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District that for \$200 a year, the city of Socorro applies for a license to utilize the recreational trail within city boundaries, but under the management of Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. So maybe akin to a special use permit with USDA for a nominal fee, defined purposes, commensurate responsibilities for maintenance, that gives MRGCD the comfort that they know that that segment does not give them exposure. There are defined uses, and a relationship with the city. In light of the larger trail, that situation is pretty unique. There are not municipalities, local units of government up and down the river corridor along our alignment that are ready to stand up and accept that responsibility. As the gears turn, we need to be anticipating how to assume maintenance responsibilities for the entirety, which then goes into the nonprofit structure that can focus on that outside of state government and in the multitude of jurisdictions along the length of the trail.

Chair Bajema: Excellent. Thank you, Mr. Colonius. Are there any other discussion points from the Commission on the legislative topic? I know it can get kind of legally quickly and a little convoluted.

Commissioner Temchin: Commissioner Davidson, in this Placitas buffalo track right now, and with the brand- new Sandoval County Commission wildfire prevention plan coming out, there's a discussion now ongoing about, in the case of wildfire, dire emergency citizens using existing trail systems as evacuation routes. So maybe I'm out of place, and please let me know. But it's a big discussion right now. Yesterday, I had a two hour meeting with the Bureau of Land Management, who oversees, Carl, the 3000 acres of the buffalo track, as to what their liability position would be if they were willing to designate, in dire emergency evacuation routes for the San Antonio de las Huertas land grant community who is land locked in the corner of highway 165 one way in, one way out, lots of trails going north that could take them away from that congestion in a dire emergency. So to summarize, I was wondering if any of this liability language discusses trail owner liability if the trails are used as an escape route in a dire Emergency. I could tell you right now, our trails are not going to be able to withstand two-wheel drive vehicles loaded with tons of stuff, people running from fire, broken down trucks. So, I was wondering if that's covered at all, and if not, does that need to be considered in the future?

Commissioner Davidson: It's not covered. That's not something that we are trying to limit liability for. Those levee roads can withstand trucks and cars driving down them.

Commissioner Temchin: I'm not just talking about this particular instance. I'm talking about all of the segments that we take from all of the land managers or owners. I'm just curious if there's a general, higher-level standard set of terms and conditions for indemnification and liability to the land owners.

Commissioner Davidson: That's not something I'm familiar with. You know, I've been really kind of honed in on this particular Mr. GCD, Elephant Butte Irrigation District.

Chair Bajema: I don't think that emergency management was considered, has been considered at all in the development of the Rio Grande trail or in any sort of our, I guess, land management discussions. Commissioner Velasquez, do any state park trails serve as emergency management corridors or evacuation routes? Is there any precedent here?

Commissioner Velasquez: I would hate for the group to get involved in doomsday scenarios. So, state parks specifically has evacuation plans that we are part of a larger network of emergency response. But I think in general, when there's an emergency response on a wildfire, it's all hands on deck, it's all access. It's saving lives, property, etc. I don't believe that there's a set agreement that State Parks has that would enable emergency responders to access a state park in order to do that, because it happens as a normal emergency operation. But we also have managing employees and law enforcement within state parks that collaborate through New Mexico State police dispatch in order to do that. So, I don't think we're a good comparison in this situation, because we have actual management of these properties. It's more than just fire, it's flooding, it's everything else. I don't know that what we've contemplated as a committee takes it to that level of natural disaster.

Chair Bajema: I would agree with that assessment. I think if we designate trail in the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, for example, I'm sure that they have some sort of emergency management planning and authority, and we would probably deviate towards their model. They are, ultimately the land managers. They would still be in control of their lands, and deviate to their emergency response, rather than sort of developing our own. Or, as Commissioner Velasquez mentioned, you know, these doomsday events are all hands on deck, very intense. I don't think we're going to be worried much about specific access when there is a large natural disaster to that effect. Does that answer your question?

Commissioner Temchin: Yes.

Commissioner Carter: I'll just add from my experience, on the Continental Divide Trail with the US Forest Service, they're the land manager, so they manage it, and they have emergency response already in place, just as an agency, especially with wildfire. Typically, with the trails, they are at the table, and they're typically used for transportation corridors

or even fire lines. I don't think we have to get into that level of detail, because within each land manager there is emergency response. The trails can kind of help advise there, so it's protected as a trail, but also we utilize it for that emergency situation.

Chair Bajema: Excellent. Thank you, Commissioner Carter. Any other points of discussion on the legislative subcommittee updates from the Commission? All right, hearing none. I'd like to go to the next point on our agenda, which is 3.4. I'd like to pass it off to Commissioner Gross to walk us through our ideas around the creation of a nonprofit subcommittee. Thank you.

iv. Creation of RGT Non-Profit (Commissioner Gross)

Commissioner Gross: I don't have anything to present today, other than saying I'm interested in chairing and working with a nonprofit subcommittee. I think we saw during our last meeting, with a presentation from Theresa Martinez from the Continental Divide Trail Coalition, about cooperative stewardship models that can really bring a lot of capacity and resources to this endeavor. I found her presentation intriguing and inspiring. I'm willing to invest time in working with fellow commissioners and other stakeholders who are interested in exploring what this could look like. Bring ideas back to this commission. I think it's a good use of my interests and experience. I've spent most of my career working with conservation NGOs in various capacities. So that's really all I have to offer.

Chair Bajema: Any questions, comments, or points of discussion from the Commission on the efforts to create a nonprofit to oversee the management of the Rio Grande trail?

Commissioner Gross: Any other commissioners, or any stakeholders, or anyone here with us virtually today, interested in collaborating on such an endeavor, on this subcommittee?

Chair Bajema: I am interested in collaborating on this endeavor.

Commissioner Temchin: I've worked on two organizations this year, Sandia Collaborative and Placitas Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Alliance. We're both creating 501c(3)s, which is particularly what those purposes fit, but I'd like to work on that committee. There's a lot of collected information already. Commissioner Gross, that could maybe help you decide quickly where you want to take this.

Commissioner Carter: I'm also glad to help advise on this subcommittee if we don't have a quorum yet, so you can count me.

Commissioner Gross: That puts us at five.

Chair Bajema: Which is perfect, good. Any other further discussion on this subcommittee topic?

Commissioner Gross: I will follow up in the next week or so and contact folks who've expressed an interest about trying to set up a first meeting.

Chair Bajema: And just for your information, Commissioner Gross, what we've been doing with the other subcommittees is holding biweekly virtual meetings. You can develop a cadence as you see fit, but that's sort of the standard we've been going for at present. A larger conversation that we should think about is that we want public participation. We want stakeholder participation in these subcommittee meetings. They're not currently accessible. They're internal teams links that we have with each other. We can strategize on some ways to put it on the Rio Grande Trail website or on the EMNRD Commission website. Just some food for thought for all of us.

Chair Bajema: Okay, before we go to the next commission topic on the agenda, maybe we could take a five-minute break. Please grab a bagel, a muffin, whatever you need, and we will resume at 11:12. Thanks.

v. RGTC Program Management Plan (Commissioner Temchin)

Chair Bajema: Commissioners, please return to your seats. The commission is back in session. Commissioner Temchin, how about you start rolling on the presentation?

Commissioner Temchin: Okay. Just to give us some historical context, in the last meeting, we talked about forming the Rio Grande Commission Office. Like any other office, it's running a program called the Rio Grande trails. The program has functions and scope and schedule deliverables to create. So, the governor in the new appropriation bill of FY 25, section 128, the governor approved, under Section 128 energy, minerals and Natural Resources Department, the extension of the \$225,000 appropriation that was given in FY 25 to move into FY 26. So, in essence, what we have now in FY 26 starting July 1, we have a one year \$225,000 allocation for the new Rio Grande Commission Office. And so the question is, what do you do with that money, and how do we communicate success and value? So, I volunteered last year, and the point being that in the minutes of our last meeting, the chair acknowledged that quote, funding is often performance-based. If the legislature sees action from the Commission, they're more likely to continue funding it. So, we need to show value. We need to show that we're spending the money wisely and appropriately. So, I volunteered last time to put together a mini discussion of, should we create a Rio Grande trail program management plan, and I'm going to go through this real quick. I am not acting as a committee. I'm acting as a one-person working group until we figure out if the commission will approve the creation and maintenance of a program management plan, which would have a workflow process, integration process, and reporting out to the governor's Office and to the secretary.

So, if we go to page four of the package, page four discussion agenda, I'm going to go through the planning process, the partnership and organizational function, the benefits of a program management plan, and maybe a little look at what the work plan management would look like. This is a wide-open working draft. I'd appreciate any comments from the peanut gallery or whoever else wants to talk. So, on Slide five, it's a big circular thing, we know that the Rio Grande Trail Commission now has cultural and environmental vision statements. We have the master plan of 2018, which is clearly from today's discussion, going to be updated and revised to reflect what we know in 2025, and looking forward, we have goals and objectives to accomplish. All well stated, and all of these documents I'm talking about are in the back of this presentation, after the page that's called backup material. So, because we have a mission and a goal, the question is, how do we do that under what sets of rules or mandates? And in fact, we have a ton of state regulatory frameworks and mandates that we need to comply with, and we have funding obligations. So the question is, how are we going to pull all these requirements together and do all the technical work we talked about today and build the trail? How are we going to do that in some kind of organized fashion, in some kind of management structure? The answer is, let's get together and create a management plan that has integrated all these parts and pieces and that can generate compliance with the requirements, collaboration between the four working subcommittees, efficiency on how we work and how we spend money, and accountability to what we told the Secretary and what we told the state legislature.

So, I'm going to go to the next page. We could develop an organizational structure. The most important part of this organizational structure is the little box in the upper left that says working draft. This is my view of what I could collect from existing information. It's a facilitating slide, a place to start, Mr. Chair, and commissioners. I'm not saying this is right. I'm only saying we know where we're funded and under energy, mineral, and natural resources. We understand that we report to the Office of the Secretary and that our illustrious chair is now going to run a Rio Grande Trail Commission Office. And then, that office, we have goals and objectives, and we have regulatory mandates levied into this to the Office of the Secretary, and as we work our way down. The main thing you see there is that we have a consultant in a special representation from New Mexico EDD/ORD, in the form of Mr. Colonius, who is now here, and his subcontract capability in Katrina and Pland. And on the other side of the organization, we have a ton of state and federal regulatory partners, everybody contributing to the concept of our office, Mr. Chair. They report in. We need to report out. There needs to be some formality on how we do that, some expectation. But the working mechanism is our subcommittees. Here you see the four subcommittees that we've formalized today: tribal. alignment, legislative, and nonprofit.

Commissioner Gross, I'm proposing that in your nonprofit organization, we house the program management structure, which is basically in the definition. How is the Rio Grande trail organization going to function? So, chair, this is all up for grabs, but it wouldn't be a subcommittee, a working group under one of these four committees. And then, based on the master plan, the subcommittees would create, as necessary, working groups that would talk about coordination, communication, collect resources as necessary, outreach for alignment, talk to user groups, and design and manage certain improvements that were necessary along the way. Those are not my definitions; those come out of our master plan. So, this is just a place to start. What would we look like as an organization?

And then on the next slide, go to the next slide, please. We already start out with roles, a little bit of roles, and responsibility. What does our team look like? What are the primary functions? I'm not going to go through all this. Ultimately, this table would become, inside of each subcommittee, what we call a RACY matrix. Each subcommittee would define who's responsible for doing what, who's got their governance to review and approve decisions, who's consulted in the process, and who's informed. So now, not only do we have an organization, but people in our commission would have specific roles and responsibilities, so people could talk to each other. I've tried to capture the information that was made available through Dan's commission packet.

So, if we go to the next slide, we would have some kind of organizational structure. This is the \$64,000 question: why do we need a program management plan? I taught a program management master's degree-level course at Denver University for eight years. This is the essence of program management. I presented this to DOE, to DOD, and the concept is you start with a plan. What am I going to do? What's the scope of work? You start with a schedule. Things are going to happen on a certain timeline. There's a set of performance deliverables. What comes out of that work? When does it come out? And, in that vector diagram, there's a cost to everything we do. So, a piece of work has a scope, a schedule, performance, and a cost. However, when we go to do the work, nothing happens exactly the way we planned. Things change every year. Especially with us being legislatively funded, things are going to change. The climate is going to change, and politics are going to change. And so the robust on the right shows that we had a scope. But guess what? Creep on scope, uncertainty changed the scope of work. We now have a new scope. The new scope of work added time to our schedule, the scope and change in scope and time added new requirements, new work activities and all that generates more cost. And so we as a funded organization, in order for us to prove that we're spending the money wisely that the Appropriation Bill gave us, we're going to have to defend and manage change. What happened to change and whether, how did we spend the \$225,000 appropriately?

So all I'm proposing is that the four subcommittees would come together, define their scopes of work, define what they want to get done in FY 26 define what they think the output would be, and define their budgets, so we could pull those four subcommittees together, integrate those in a single document. Would say, this is our FY 26 plan. And I think as we go through that, there's going to be some interesting discussions about are we going to spend \$225,000? Do we need more? Do we need less? How are we going to spend that money, and how are we going to measure that the money was spent appropriately? What are the metrics?

This is a little bit of description of when we talk about when you want to define the scope of work. What does that definition look like? So in here, the one thing I added on the bottom of scope, schedule, deliverables, and cost is a change in risk management. And I would propose to you that that's potentially the most significant thing, as Commissioner Carter said, we've got two segments approved, that since the last meeting, things changed. We got more information. We got people to say yes to things we weren't sure about. And that change in input into those two segments allowed us to tentatively approve those segments today.

So all I'm proposing then is that if we came together and we had a work for workflow process, how the four subcommittees integrated, what the scope was, who was going to do, what we could put all that together and raise it to a higher level, Mr. Chair, which would be your office of the Rio Grande Trail Commission. And the best part of this, I believe, is that once we establish the plan, we could periodically measure the key performance indicators and show that we were making positive progress. We could report that to the governor's office. We could report that to the secretary. We could discuss it among ourselves in each quarterly meeting or semiannually. How are we doing, what were the lessons learned? How do we improve what we're doing and so on? And most significantly, as we said last time, we could convince the legislator that the Rio Grande trail Commission Office is a valuable office and needs to be continually funded until we have 1000s of people going up and down our state every year.

Here is our vision statement from the master plan 2018 and I would propose Mr. Chair that maybe we all look at it, and if we're going to have a program, we could then modify it or update it, enhance it to whatever you want, whatever this commission currently says, This is our new vision.

This is very important. This is the our regulatory goals, our alignment and design guidelines that we have to meet. This is a regulatory requirement. These five steps need to be fulfilled, and we need to show that we're doing our work. It fits inside the envelope of these regulatory requirements. This is the goals, as they were most recently stated in the

package that Pland prepared. I would suggest some of our goals have changed, commissioners, chair and everything we see here could be updated.

This is the reference to the general appropriation bill that was signed by the governor, where you can see that the \$225,000 is now reauthorized starting July 1. We're spending money as of July 1 against this. And the interesting part to note, and I would reference to you that the \$225,000 which was authorized last year has been moved into this year, and it represents three years of \$75,000. So, perhaps what they did was authorize a three year program in this current bill. If we don't spend all the money in 26 we need to justify, move the remaining money to 27 move the remaining money to 28. That's just a personal interpretation. It's too coincidental to me that three times 75,000 equals 225, and so maybe this is a three-year program, but you don't get the remaining money if you didn't earn the money in the current year. And so, my whole concept is we need to show the legislature that we're spending this money wisely, and so we've earned their trust to continue us on for another couple of years of funding. Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you very much

Chair Bajema: Just provide a little more context onto the budgetary piece. Yes, in the past, we've received annual appropriations of \$75,000 every year for reasons unknown. In talking with the legislature, we were appropriated \$225,000 one-time special appropriation. And that money does not extend to fiscal year 27, so it is only available for fiscal year 26, which we will hit on July 1 of 2025. Our goal is to spend all that money in the most beneficial ways possible. Commissioner Temchin, thank you so much for bringing this to the commission. I think that this plan is fantastic, and it's really valuable for us to have metrics to report on, and by statute, we're required to present updates to the legislature and interim committee, so specifically targeting the water and natural resources interim committee and the rural economic development interim committee for this interim period that's starting now until October. So, having some of those metrics will be really helpful. And we are also supposed to provide a report to the governor's office on the progress made by the Rio Grande Trail Commission. And those metrics will also be super helpful. Seeing that we have 25 minutes left on our time today.

Commissioner Temchin: I would just like to follow up. I'm basically asking if the commission would approve creating a working group or an organization, and I propose that the group would sit under Commissioner Gross's nonprofit organization or somewhere else. And if that were approved, then I would use the templates of the application formats to create standard working templates for each of the four committees to fill in a concise fashion. This is our scope, this is our schedule. These are the deliverables we expect. So, you wouldn't have to free form it. You just fill out each of the subcommittee members fill

out the form, just like the applications for segment form, submit them back to me, if I was approved as a facilitator.

Chair Bajema: Commissioner Temchin, would you like to make a motion?

Commissioner Temchin: I'd like to make a motion that the Commission approve the formation of a working group to facilitate the integration of the subcommittee information into a single Rio Grande Trail Commission office program management plan for FY 26.

Chair Bajema: Do I have a second?

Commissioner Carter: Since the proposal is housed under Commissioner Gross's nonprofit, I just want to make sure that that's not adding extra work and burden to that subcommittee.

Commissioner Gross: First of all, Commissioner Temchin, thanks for putting this together. You clearly have a lot of experience in this area, and this is great for the commission to figure out a way to structure our work and ultimately provide value to the taxpayers and make progress toward our mission. I would like to discuss if there was a way to find a different place in the org chart for this to go then under the nonprofit subcommittee. It's something that touches all of the subcommittees, and I think in deciding to take on chairing that subcommittee, I know it's going to be a lot of work. The oversight of this, I think, would expand that work quite a bit beyond the capacity I have to put into that committee.

Commissioner Temchin: Commissioner, thank you, Commissioner.

Chair Bajema: Please go through the Chair. Commissioner Gross, thank you for that comment. Commissioner Velasquez, I think that you have a suggestion for an amendment to this plan.

Commissioner Velasquez: I would recommend that this fall under the legislative committee. First of all, Commissioner Temchin, I love the mind of an engineer. Both of my kids are engineers, can't beat that approach. And so thank you so much for this work. I believe that it's important infrastructure for the work that the commission is going to do. I think this will directly inform our legislative committee, which will potentially seek re authorizations of funds, potentially seek more funds, maybe even go after capital funds. I really do think that this would fit best as a working group within the legislative committee, just because of what it's going to inform down the line and the fact that it will have a direct impact and support the Commission's ability to go and seek funding, maintain funding, retain funding, and potentially find capital funding for one-time measures. I think it would

fit there, and that would be my recommendation. But thank you for your tremendous amount of work and the mind of an engineer.

Chair Bajema: It is very well organized. Yes.

Commissioner Temchin: I want to reference special witness Colonius's statement. When we go back to Appendix B. Now that you've seen this, I want to read some words, Commissioner Gross, as to why I put it there. The nonprofit subcommittee was created to lead the development of a sustainable organization structure to help build capacity, coordinate resources, ensure the trails ongoing development, management, and stewardship. Now you can read that as we're talking about trail segments, or you can read it as support in the development of the RGT office. So, when I read it as a manager, I read this as supporting the creation of the new office. But I like Commissioner Velasquez's recommendation. I don't know that it matters where it sits, as long as we all contribute our thinking of what we want to do, so we can be tracked and transparent, and accountable to reporting outside of our commission. The fact that everybody on this commission is working hard to get this trail done in a value proposition, and they're doing the things they want they said they wanted to do.

Chair Bajema: Thank you. Commissioner Carter.

Commissioner Carter: As a clarification on the process of working groups, this has come up a new item here. It seems like it's housed under the subcommittees. Maybe it's just a discussion of the necessity of creating working groups. Is that something that needs to be approved in this commission, if we decide to do that as a committee, or is that just something that is a tool within a subcommittee that we can create, like a working group or a strategic meeting? I'm thinking for the alignment we might have, like, you know, a Socorro working group, just to identify alignments. Is that something that we would have to formally go through this commission to establish, or could we just create that as an informal body to discuss specific matters?

Chair Bajema: It's my understanding that it can be created as an informal body. But, I would, I would lean on my commissioners with more institutional knowledge, Commissioner Velasquez or Commissioner Glendenning, if you have any more clear understanding of the rules and regulations.

Commissioner Velasquez: My recommendation is it just happens as part of the work of the standing committees. If it falls within one or the other, it's just the work of the committee, with specific emphasis in one area that the committee is charged to perform evaluation and potentially bring back to the Commission. In this scenario, my recommendation would be that this work fall within the legislative committee. That means that Commissioner

Temkin should be part of our committee in order for this work to happen under that umbrella, and then we bring it back to the Commission. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chair Bajema: Thank you, Commissioner Velasquez. I like that idea, too. I think that the legislative subcommittee is an appropriate place to put it. All of the subcommittees will provide inputs as are relevant to those subcommittees' missions, as we have identified.

Commissioner Temchin: I'd like to make a proposition. Then in the agenda, we get rid of the working group labels, so we're just subcommittees. And then we'll let the subcommittees form their own working groups as appropriate. And then second question is, if the work is going to be done under legislative group, then I'll get together with Commissioner Davidson and we'll figure out if people like the idea of standardizing and templating the input sheets from each subcommittee so we could pull that all together quickly in a standard work breakdown structure. So, it's easy to assemble the four committees. Mr. Commissioner Davidson, I'll get in touch with you after this.

Commissioner Davidson: Yeah, that sounds good.

Chair Bajema: Commissioner Temchin, I would encourage you to participate in all the subcommittee meetings too, and we can work to get you on the agenda to plug in where appropriate.

Commissioner Temchin: I would appreciate that invitation. Thank you.

Commissioner Carter: Is there still an outstanding motion?

Chair Bajema: There is still an outstanding motion. Since we have identified that working groups do not need to go through an official commission approval process, Commissioner Temchin?

Commissioner Temchin: I would like to remove my motion that there be a formal Working Group designated for the development of the PMP and recognize that each subcommittee will develop their own working group structure as deemed appropriate. Thank you, Commissioner Carter.

Chair Bajema: Next, I'd like to go to either Katrina or Dan to walk us through some very quick updates on the stakeholder convenings that happened in Dona Ana County on May 2 and May 3.

d. Miscellaneous

i. May 2nd-3rd, 2025 Doña Ana County stakeholder meetings

Dan Majewski: Jack, who works with us at Pland Collaborative, and I went down to Dona Ana County to do some stakeholder engagement. We had meetings in Hatch. So we had an internal stakeholder meeting and did some tabling in Hatch, and then also down in Mesilla. So, same thing: we had an internal stakeholder meeting and then did some tabling down there. We have a very strong relationship with Doña Ana County. They're very supportive of the trail, so this engagement was in partnership with them. The primary stakeholder that we're working with down there, as it relates to the current alignment of the trail, is IBWC, which is the International Boundary and Water Commission. They are the entity that's primarily responsible for the levy in that area. So, the proposed alignment of the trail would be along the levee down there. There is already a section of trail in Doña Ana County that has been designated as the Rio Grande Trail. It's called the La Llorona Trail. You can talk to Commissioner Carter, who lives in Las Cruces, more about that. So, there is already precedent for having a levee trail down there. Specifically, in Mesilla, there's very strong support for continuing the La Llorona trail and extending it along the levees. Generally, very positive engagement down there, and we're going to continue working closely with Doña Ana County and IBWC, of course, in partnership with the alignment subcommittee and all the other subcommittees to continue the progress down there. Please let me know if you have any other questions about that.

7. Announcement of Next Meeting

a. Discussion: Friday, September 19, Taos

i. Early November: Strategic planning session, Albuquerque

Chair Bajema: Our next meeting will be held on Friday, September 19, in Taos. And then we will have a strategic planning session in Albuquerque sometime in early November as well to follow up on a lot of the great work that Commissioner Temchin is doing. And to align our goals and priorities, especially to get ready for the upcoming legislative session. If anyone cannot make the Friday, September 19 time, please let me know as soon as possible. The reason that we've placed it there is because there is an outdoor recreation conference.

Dan Majewski: Chair, the conference is going to be happening in Gallup. So, it's September 8 through 10th. It's the Outdoor Economies Conference. The organizer of the conference reached out to us with interest in a presentation about the Rio Grande Trail. We're going to coordinate with the chair and make sure that the commission is well represented at that presentation. That's why we've pushed it a little later in September, so it doesn't conflict with this other gathering.

Chair Bajema: Yes, thank you, Dan. Since we have 10 minutes remaining, I wanted to thank all of the public members for coming out and sticking through almost three hours of this

commission meeting. I want to give you all an opportunity to speak and to give feedback on the commission meeting today. We would love to hear your feedback and input. If we have time at the end, we can touch on 7b, but I really wanted to make sure that y'all had an opportunity to ask questions or give comments and feedback. And if you're online, we would also welcome your feedback and comments. Please raise your hand, and we will call on you in the order that your hand is raised.

7. Public Comment

Nate Begay: Hello, Chair commission. I had a question. I'm Nate Begay. I'm the Regional Transportation Coordinator for US Fish and Wildlife Service. We're working on a bike trail down at Bosque del Apache through the Federal Lands Access Program. My question is, in terms of getting letters of support either through the commission or other channels, do you have a formal process to do that, or is it more just reaching out directly to the chair or other folks on the commission?

Chair Bajema: I'll allow other folks to respond. But, from my understanding, the departments, the state government departments, EMNRD, EDD, and ORD are fully equipped and able to provide letters of support. From the commission standpoint, I think that's something that we could also do, but I think you would have a quicker avenue and mechanism through reaching out to me directly for EMNRD, or potentially Mr. Colonius at the outdoor recreation division.

Any other public comments? Seeing none in the audience, thank you for taking the time out of your Friday morning to be here today. We appreciate you. And anyone online, any comments, questions, or concerns, we would love to hear them.

Commissioner Velasquez: I would like to take a point of privilege and recognize our deputy Cabinet Secretary for the Energy Minerals, and Natural Resources Department. Mr. Ben Shelton, in the back, thank you, Ben, for your continued support of the Rio Grande Trail Commission.

7b. Which communities should we meet in?

Chair Bajema: Also, thank you for serving as an outstanding tribal liaison for our department. You've been a big help and support, thank you. All right, any comments from online? Seeing none, we have an item on the agenda, 7b, which community should we meet in? I just want a quick discussion with the Commission. We've heard a lot from Commissioner Temchin about the potential need to have a meeting with stakeholders in the Placitas region. Are there any other regions that the commission would like to prioritize

for doing some sort of public convening similar to the Doña Ana stakeholder meeting? Or if there's anything from our collaborators at Pland?

Katrina Arndt: We would like to have one in Doña Ana County, at some point, because there is a lot of trail that we can potentially designate, and then Albuquerque as well. These meetings really help to energize the community and help us focus in on these areas. So, if there are any other areas that you all like us to focus on, it would be great to hear.

Commissioner Carter: I think that's a good idea with Albuquerque, since there is some stuff there and there are a lot of people, but also Socorro, I think there could be some really great opportunities there. There's a lot of existing stuff and a blossoming trail community there, so I think that could be a good one. I am biased to Las Cruces, but we have had some love in the past, and we have a lot of things going. So, just think of some of our other communities that maybe haven't had the opportunity to host the commission or meeting. So specifically, from Santa Fe to Taos, I think there are a lot of communities within that area that could be impacted one way or another. So considering that, and even just in Santa Fe proper, based on the conversation yesterday at the field visit, I think Santa Fe would be a good place to consider in the future for a working group meeting on potential alignments.

Commissioner Gross: Mr. Chair, I really enjoyed, with our last meeting in T or C, the field trip. I would love to see that incorporated into all of our meetings, if possible.

Chair Bajema: Excellent. Well, I believe that takes us to the end of our very productive agenda today. Thank you for all the commissioners for coming out. I know that a lot of you live, especially Commissioner Carter, very far away. So thank you so much for taking the time to drive up here and be here in person. And thank you all, for the public, for coming out and listening to us. We would love to continue to engage with you wherever possible. And thank you to Carl and Pland Collaborative for all the great work that you guys have been doing. This couldn't happen without y'all. So, thank you so much.

9. Adjournment

Chair Bajema: And with that, I would like to close the 22nd Rio Grande Trail Commission meeting. Thank you all for your time.

Commissioner Carter: **Chair. Motion to adjourn.**

Chair Bajema: Do I have a second?

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Temchin – YES

Commissioner Harris – YES

Commissioner Chacon – YES

Commissioner Gross – YES

Chair Bajema – YES

Commissioner Velasquez – YES

Commissioner Armijo – YES

Commissioner Davidson – YES

Commissioner Glendenning – YES

Commissioner Carter – YES

With unanimous consent, this motion is approved.

Chair Bajema: The 22nd Rio Grande Trail Commission meeting is hereby adjourned. Thank you, all.

ATTACHMENT B: REPORT BACK: RGTC TRIBAL SUBCOMMITTEE



Report Back: RGTC Tribal Subcommittee – Sept 19, 2025

Overview

The Tribal Subcommittee has been working to expand outreach to tribes, nations, and pueblos, while addressing longstanding concerns about sovereignty, cultural protection, and meaningful inclusion in the Rio Grande Trail planning process.

Key Engagements

- **San Felipe Pueblo** raised concerns about historic ranges extending beyond current boundaries, encroachment, loss of history, and lack of engagement over the past eight years. They emphasized the need to respect sovereignty and protect cultural sites.
- The **San Ildefonso Pueblo** meeting was positive, but no tribal members were present.
- Additional pueblos identified for outreach include Santo Domingo, Tesuque, Taos, Nambe, Picuris (supportive), and Pojoaque (deferred to other pueblos).

Core Concerns

- It is difficult to completely avoid sites of cultural importance.
- Sovereignty and trespassing must be addressed beyond signage and fencing.
- Tribes expressed frustration with exclusion from past processes and called for a structural shift to ensure their voices are central.

Next Steps

- Compile and reach out to partner organizations; invite them to join subcommittee work.
- Continue pueblo outreach, beginning with those already identified.
- Explore on-call engineering support for trail planning.
- Consider a broader tribal convening to strengthen participation.

Conclusion

The subcommittee has surfaced critical issues and has begun building relationships, but significant challenges remain. Meaningful progress will depend on consistent outreach, stronger structural commitments to tribal engagement, and building trust with tribes, nations, and pueblos throughout New Mexico.

ATTACHMENT C: REPORT BACK: RGTC ALIGNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE



Report Back: RGTC Alignment Subcommittee – Sept 19 RGT Commission Meeting

Overview

Over the summer, the Alignment Subcommittee met regularly to advance trail designation priorities, refine alignment strategies, and coordinate with partner agencies. The focus has been on filling priority gaps, clarifying the designation process, integrating signage standards, and preparing strategies for long-term trail completion.

Key Updates

Trail Designation Progress

- **Caja del Rio (Santa Fe County):** County resolution is under review; City of Santa Fe Parks provided a support letter.
- **Horsethief Mesa (Taos County):** BLM completed the application and issued a letter of support.

Trail Prioritization

- Identify and document gaps, reasons for delays, and opportunities to designate “low-hanging fruit”.
- Proposal to add segment status descriptions in reporting tables and explore integration with related trails (e.g., Old Spanish Trail, Camino Real).
- Subcommittee recommends a clear completion strategy (map, spreadsheet) to guide where working groups and on-the-ground scouting are needed.

Signage

- Provided comments on the early draft of the signage package.
- Call to ensure clarity on how RGT branding integrates with local and federal agency signage.
- Next steps include templates for sign design, placement guidance, and considering a use agreement/trademark for the RGT logo.

Santa Fe to Taos Corridor

- Identified as a near-term opportunity to engage BLM/USFS and other federal partners.
- Scope of engagement and ground-truthing of routes underway.

Trail Work & Maintenance

- Explored contracting conservation corps for maintenance; noted varying quality and efficiency among corps.
 - State Land Office: has \$200,000 in Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) funds; could support trail work but would require YCC board approval.
 - Discussion of categorizing professional trail builders/designers separately from engineers to simplify contracting.
-

Process & Coordination

- Subcommittee is refining application forms, letters of support, and alignment tracking tools (spreadsheets, web maps).
 - Outlined steps toward a comprehensive **Completion Strategy** aligned with the State Trails Act, including public engagement requirements, working group formation, and gap-filling route development.
-

Next Steps

- Review and finalize the RGT signage package.
- Discuss segment priorities in detail and determine which segments to pursue next for designation.
- Explore procurement to support trail designers/builders and the use of YCC funding for maintenance.

ATTACHMENT D: RIO GRANDE TRAIL FY 25 ANNUAL REPORT: COUNTY SUMMARIES



COUNTY SUMMARIES

COUNTY SUMMARIES

TAOS COUNTY

57 miles are designated in Taos County, comprised of Cebolla Mesa, La Junta, the West Rim Trails, and 38 miles of unnamed BLM trails that lead from La Junta north to the Colorado border.

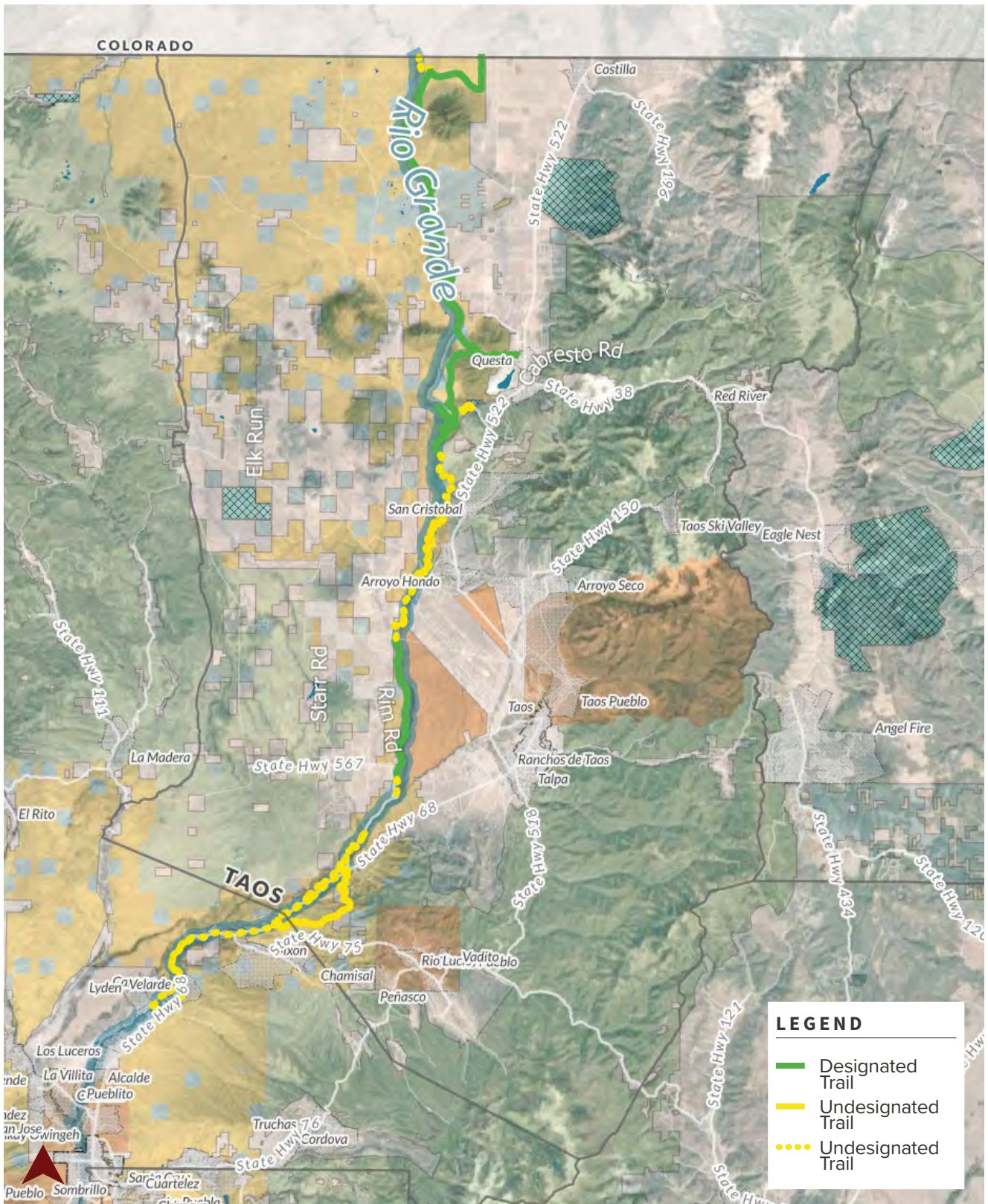
14.5 miles are undesignated in Taos County, comprised of Horsethief Mesa, John Dunn Bridge, and Las Minas Trail.

UNDESIGNATED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH (MILES)	DESCRIPTION
Horsethief Mesa Trail (TS-01-F)	5.9	Taos County - An existing BLM trail located along the top eastern edge of the gorge from just north of the John Dunn Bridge up to USFS land. BLM has previously expressed support for this alignment. Additionally, a trail connection would need to be built to connect the John Dunn Bridge/ County Road B007 to the top of the mesa.
John Dunn Bridge (TS-02-A)	0.8	Taos County - A bridge over the Rio Grande on BLM land, just west of Arroyo Hondo. This would connect the existing Horsethief Mesa Trail in the northeast to the proposed Bridge to Bridge trail in the southwest.
Las Minas Trail (TS-06)	2.7	Taos County - Starting at the Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center in Pilar, this backcountry trail on BLM land connects State Hwy 68 to an existing trail along the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, which continues west on BLM land and connects back up to Hwy 68. Three options for alignment are in this area: this loop that includes Las Minas, an alignment along State Hwy 68, and an alignment just north of the river in BLM land.
Las Minas Trail South (TS-07, RA-01)	6.6	Taos County/Rio Arriba County - Two segments located on BLM land, connecting Las Minas back to Hwy 68. Further coordination is required to determine if designating this alignment is feasible.

35 Miles are Proposed in Taos County, with different segments in varying levels of development. Below is more information about segments that are in the planning stages.

PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH (MILES)	DESCRIPTION
Garrapata Canyon - Cebolla/ Horsethief Connection (TS-01-E)	7.5	In partnership with the USFS, a route has been identified to connect Cebolla Mesa to Horsethief Mesa. Initial linework has been identified. Opportunities include numerous existing roads and paths. Challenges include significant grade changes throughout the route and multiple canyons.
John Dunn Escape/ Horsethief Connector (TS-01-G)	0.5	A route has been identified that would connect John Dunn Bridge to Horsethief Mesa. Challenges include significant grade changes.
Bridge-to-Bridge (TS-02-B)	5.1	The alignment and progress of this trail development, which would connect John Dunn Bridge to the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge, needs to be confirmed with BLM.

FIGURE 1. TAOS COUNTY



COUNTY SUMMARIES

SANTA FE COUNTY

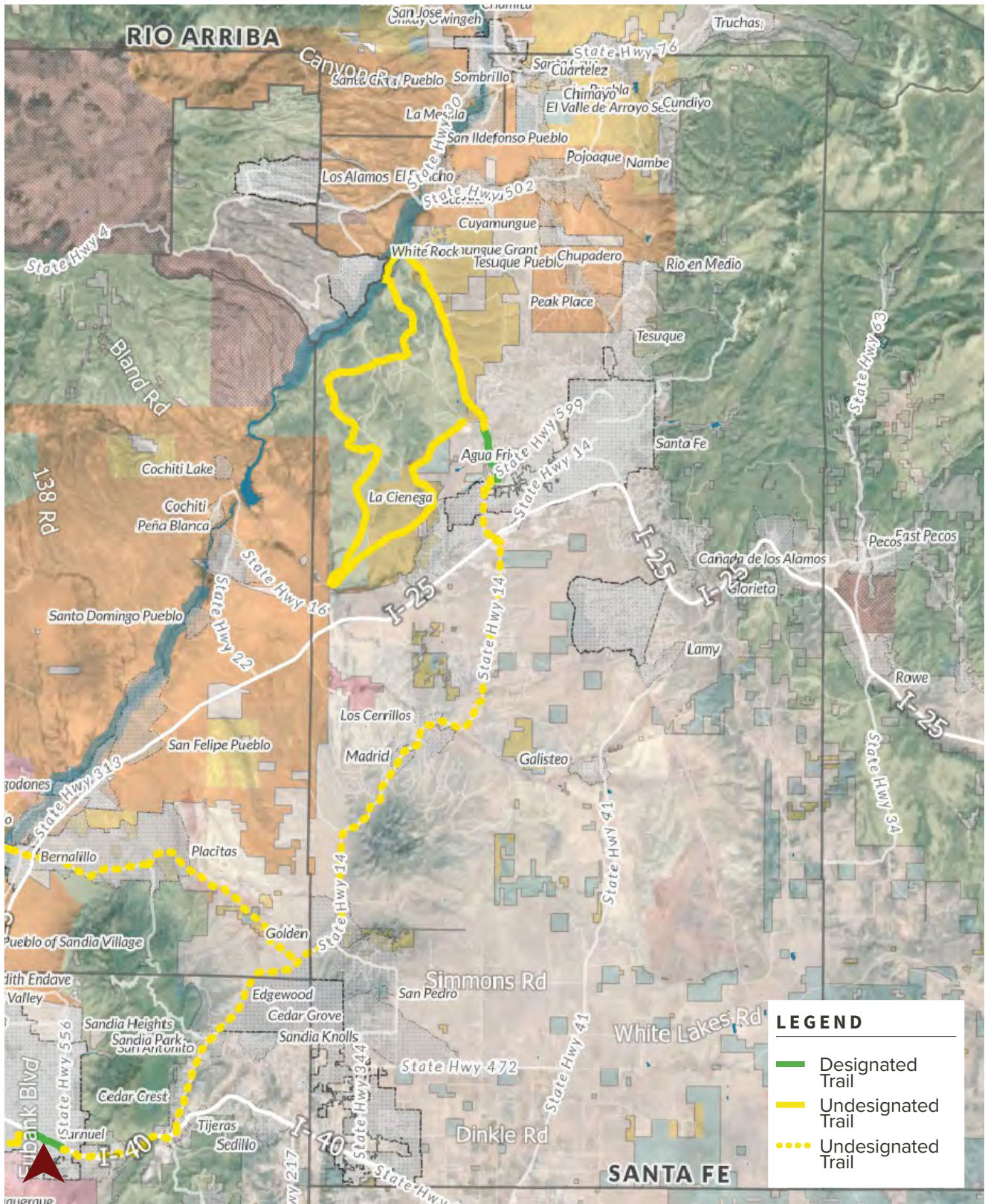
59 miles of trail are undesignated in Santa Fe County. Most of the undesignated miles are located in the Caja del Rio and part of a large loop.

UNDESIGNATED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
Caja del Rio Connection (SF-03-A)	12.11	<p>Santa Fe County - A long connection through BLM and USFS land, from the intersection of Caja del Rio Road & Caja Del Oro Grant Rd, and North to the Rio Grande. This trail segment is also designated and signed as the historic Camino Real.</p> <p>From Headquarters Well Trailhead north, this section is no longer being prioritized because it terminates at sovereign tribal land.</p> <p>However, the 3.36-mile paved trail section, from Camino de Rey Road south to the Santa Fe River Trail, was introduced for designation at the June 13 RGTC meeting.</p> <p>The unpaved section from Caja del Oro Road northwest to Headquarters Well Trailhead may also be utilized as a connection.</p>
Caja del Rio Trails (SF-03-H)	46.5	<p>Santa Fe County – A large loop through the Caja that covers over 40 miles of USFS and BLM land. Cochiti Pueblo had identified concerns about the trail being located close to their boundaries, and additional trail traffic could increase trespassing and vandalism. For this reason, the designation of this segment is not a priority.</p> <p>However, southern portions of the loop could be utilized to create a connection to cross I-25, which would include trail sections that are not currently part of the existing alignment.</p>
Santa Fe River Trail – Camino Real South (SF-03-B)	0.66	<p>Santa Fe County - This segment is on the north side of the Santa Fe River and is identified in the 2018 RGT Plan as part of the Santa Fe to Albuquerque Connection. However, this segment may no longer be used if a different alignment through the Caja is utilized.</p>

49 miles of trail are proposed in Santa Fe County. The majority of proposed trail miles are located along NM Hwy 14, which connects Santa Fe and Albuquerque. Below is more information about segments that are in the planning stages.

PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
NM Highway 14 (SF-03-F)	40.0	<p>There are active discussions with trail advocacy organizations in this area to determine the viability of a trail along the highway. The focus is connecting the communities of Madrid, Cerillos, and Golden as an initial step. There has also been an investigation of right-of-way width in partnership with NMDOT.</p>

FIGURE 2. SANTA FE COUNTY



COUNTY SUMMARIES

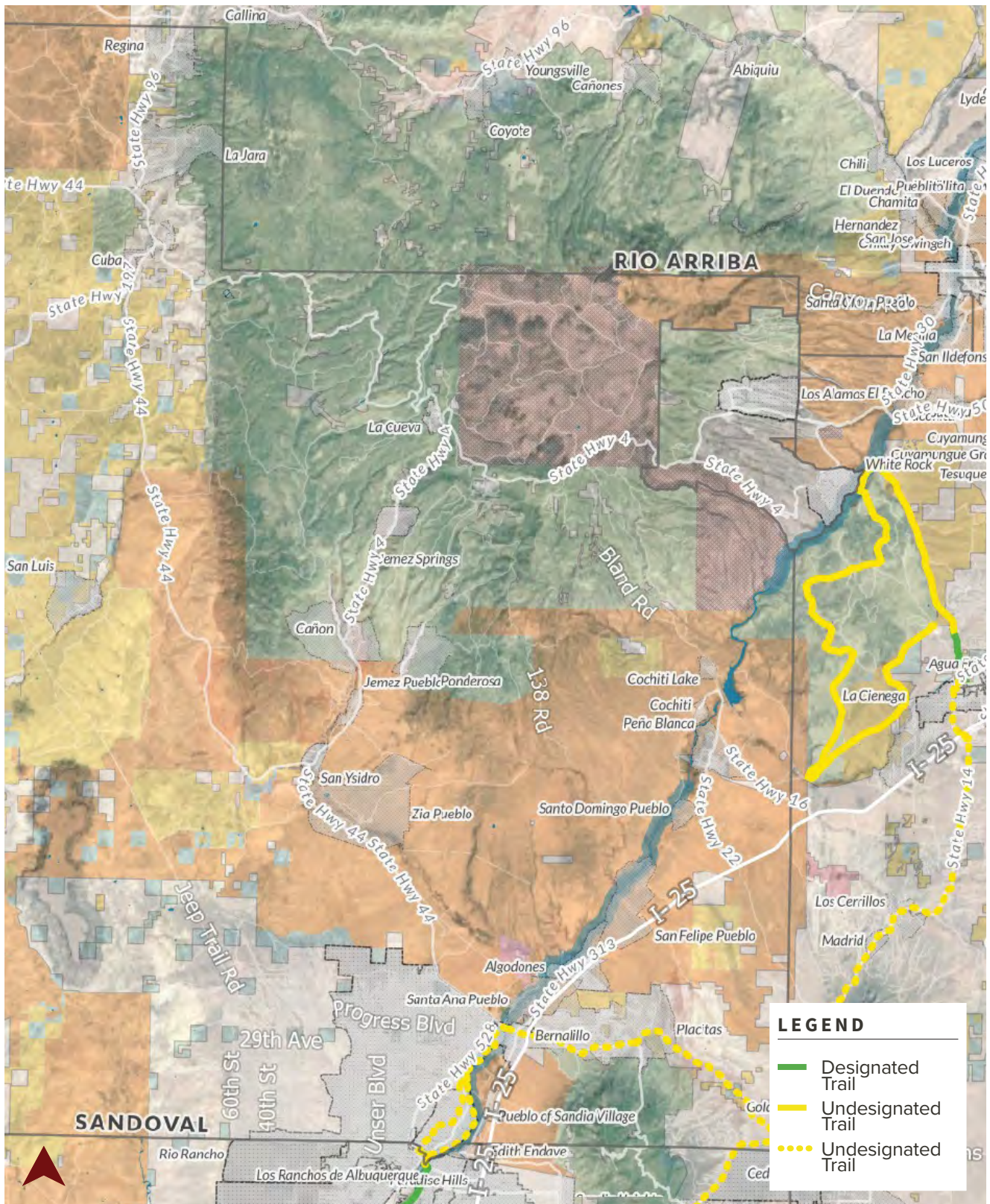
SANDOVAL COUNTY

40 miles of proposed trail alignments are in Sandoval County. This includes proposed trails along the Corrales Drain, roadways in Corrales and Bernalillo, an east/west connection through Placitas, and a trail along a gas easement that would connect Hwy 165 to Hwy 14. For the advancement of these proposed areas, further coordination with Corrales and Placitas is required. Below is more information about segments that are in the planning stages.

Note: Based on conversations with Santa and Santa Ana Pueblos, the unpaved portions of NM 165 through the Sandia Mountains and NM 536 through the Sandia Mountains are no longer considered for designation.

PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
NM Highway 14 (SF-03-F)	4.0	There are active discussions with stakeholders in this area to determine the viability of a trail along the highway. The focus is connecting the communities of Madrid, Cerillos, and Golden as an initial step. There has also been an investigation of right-of-way width in partnership with NMDOT.
Placitas Gas Line Easement (SV-08-A)	12.2	This would be an alternative to using the unpaved portion of NM 165/NM 536, which has been criticized by Santa Ana Pueblo and Sandia Pueblo.
Placitas Cutoff, NM 165/550 (SV-08-B)	8.5	This would be part of the same alternative to using the unpaved portion of NM 165/NM 536, which has been criticized by Santa Ana Pueblo and Sandia Pueblo. In a meeting with Santa Ana Pueblo, they expressed no concerns about this section. Challenges include being along a busy state highway and a crossing of I-25 through a heavily trafficked interchange.

FIGURE 3. SANDOVAL COUNTY



COUNTY SUMMARIES

BERNALILLO COUNTY

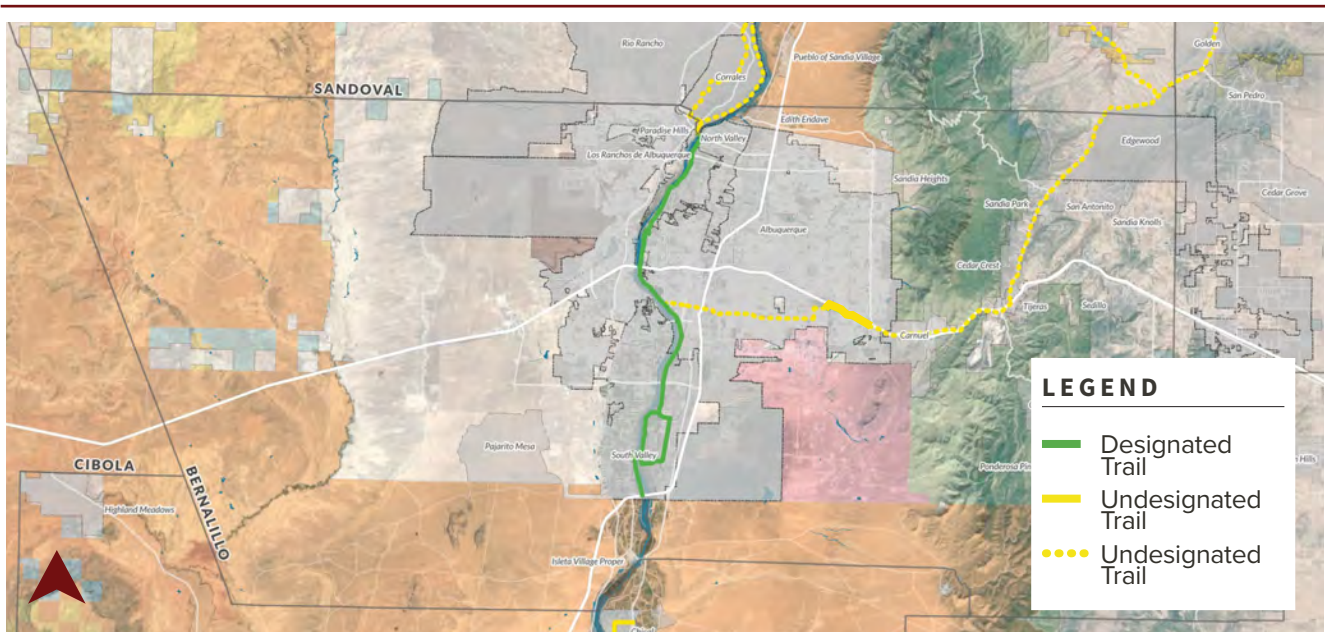
25 miles are designated through the Bosque Trail system, which includes the Chris Chavez Trail, the West Riverside Trail, the Paseo del Bosque Trail, the Rio Grande Nature Center, and Valle de Oro Trail.

UNDESIGNATED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
Sandia Mtn Detour - NM 14 Bike Route (SF-03-G)	5.73	A paved trail exists on the east side of NM 14 between Tijeras and San Antonito. It was recently improved and is appropriate for cycling and pedestrians.

18 miles are proposed from the river east to connect to the HW 14 alignment. Below is more information about segments that are in the planning stages.

PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
Sandia Mtn Detour - on-street thru Abq (BN-05-A)	10.5	Most of the existing master plan alignment travels along shoulder bike lanes and is not a preferred alignment. The City of Albuquerque and Toole Design were engaged to identify a more desirable alignment along this east-west connector. The next step would be following up with the City of Albuquerque and introducing the realignment concept to the RGTC.
Sandia Mtn Detour - Rte 66 (BN-05-F)	7.6	This section of Old Route 66 through Tijeras Canyon is a popular bicycle route. It has wide shoulders but no dedicated facilities for pedestrians or equestrians.

FIGURE 4. BERNALILLO COUNTY



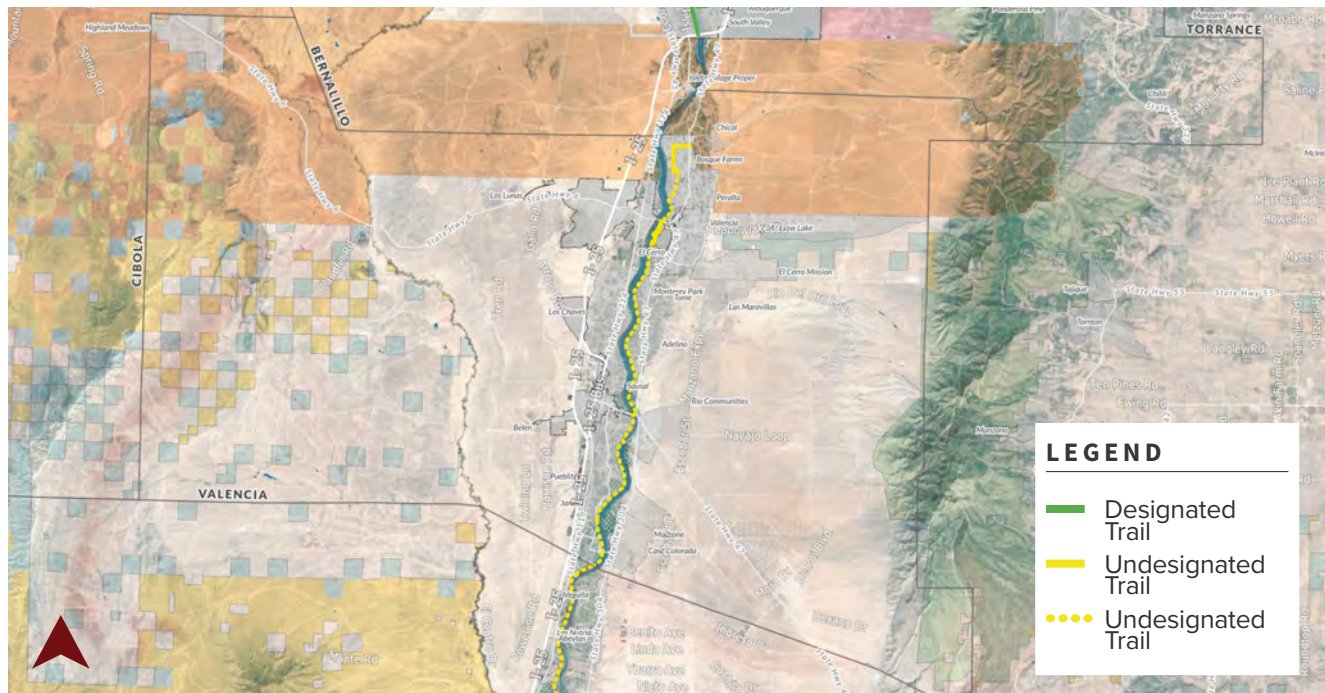
VALENCIA COUNTY

5 miles are undesignated in Valencia County, comprised of two segments- the North Bosque Loop Trail in Bosque Farms, and the River Park Trails in Los Lunas.

UNDESIGNATED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
North Bosque Loop Trail (VL-02-A)	2.51	Valencia County – A paved trail adjacent to roads in Bosque Farms. On the north side, it ends at the Pueblo of Isleta. Alignments connecting east around Isleta should be explored.
River Park Trails (VL-03-A)	2.45	Valencia County – Hard-packed trails in the Bosque of Los Lunas, managed by the town. These are new trails that have been developed since the completion of the 2018 RGT master plan. Therefore, they are not part of the initial plan but are a more desirable recreation experience than the adjacent levee/ditch trail initially proposed. Coordination is required with the Village of Los Lunas to advance the designation. Wildfires in June 2025 impacted this area.

23 miles are proposed in Valencia County, comprised of the Otero Interior Drain and two segments of levee trail. The Otero Interior Drain is a connection from Bosque Farms, through Peralta, and back to the Rio levee. The levee road alignment are located on both sides of the river, crossing at the East River Road Bridge. For advancing the development and designation of the levee road, further coordination with MRGCD is required.

FIGURE 5. VALENCIA COUNTY



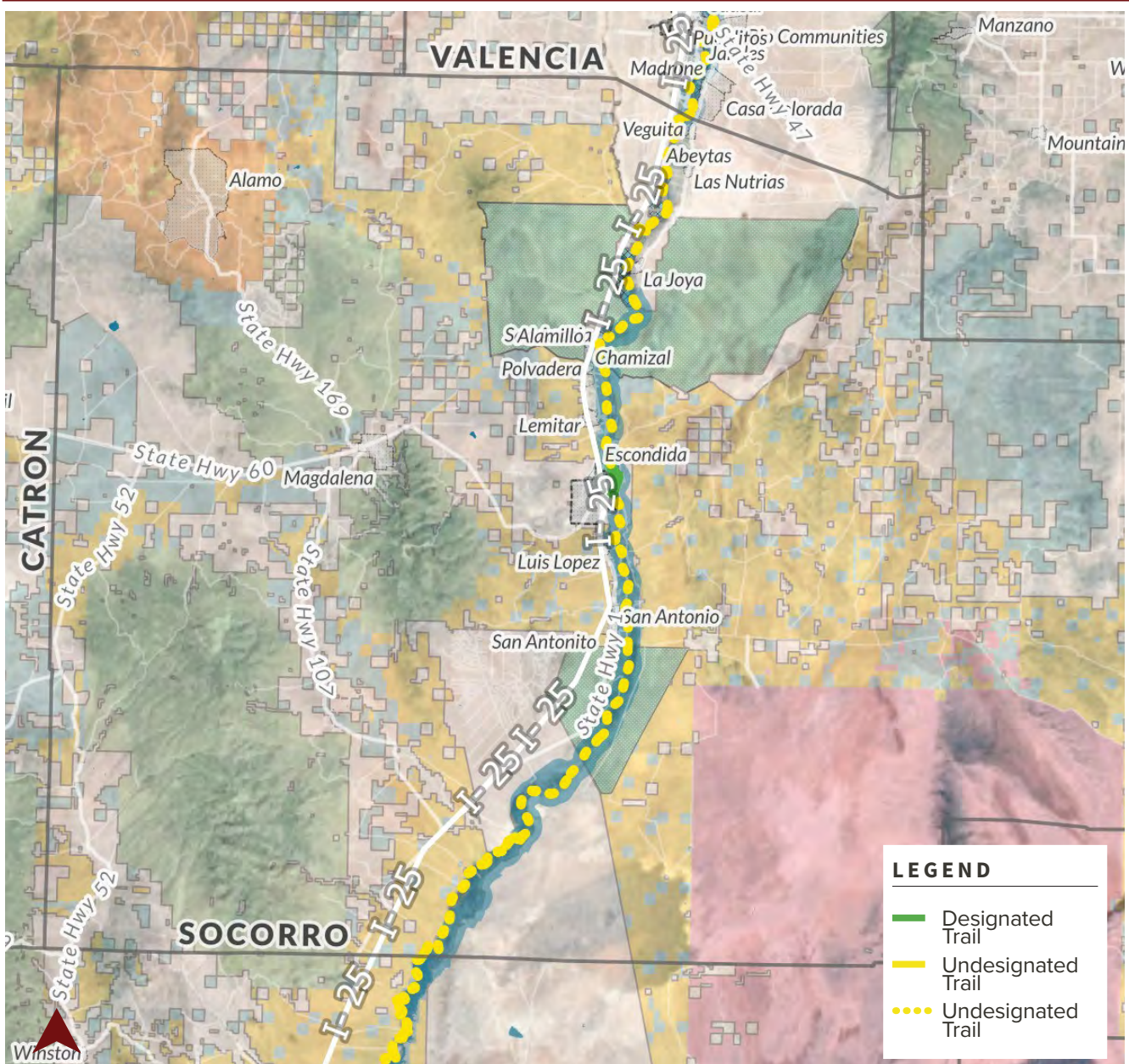
COUNTY SUMMARIES

SOCORRO COUNTY

4.4 Miles are designated in Socorro County, comprised of the Socorro Valley Bosque Trail, including out-and-back spurs.

91 miles are proposed in Socorro County, with a majority of trail miles, 60, located along levee roads managed by MRGCD. The remainder follow unpaved, multi-use roadways along State Park land, close to BLM land. To proceed with a designation, coordination with the MRGCD is required.

FIGURE 6. SOCORRO COUNTY



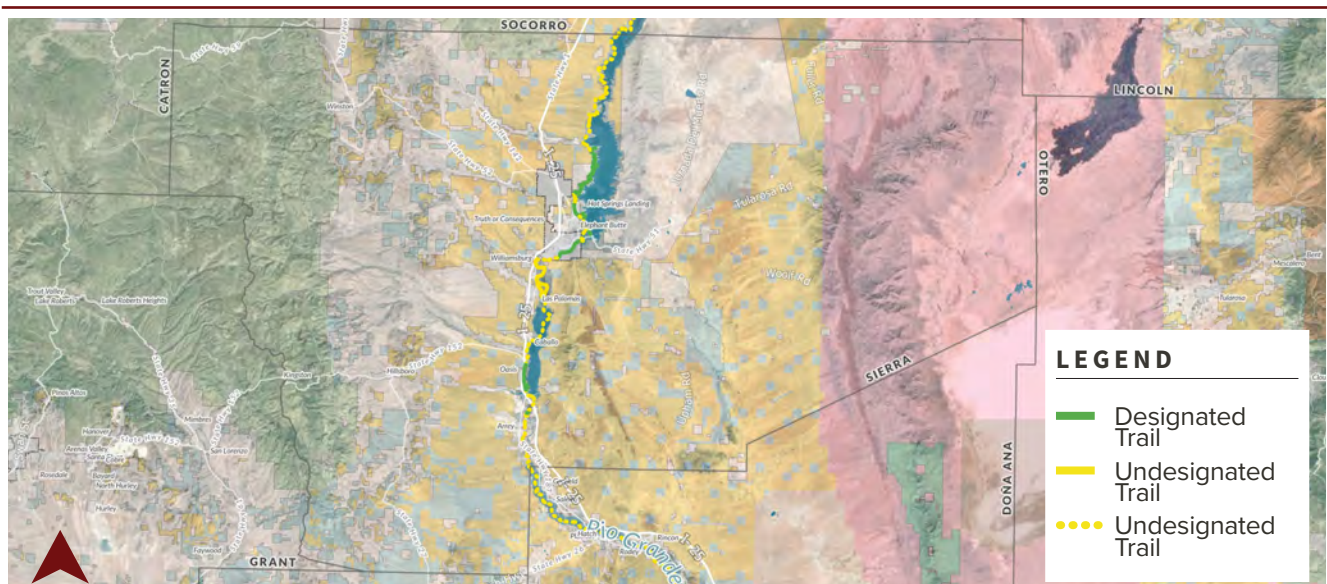
SIERRA COUNTY

24.4 miles of trail are designated in Sierra County, comprised of lakeshore trails along Elephant Butte, a lightly used county road through the city of Truth or Consequences, and lakeshore trails through Caballo Lake State Park. **10 miles of trail are undesignated in Sierra County.**

49.9 miles of trails are proposed in Sierra County. This includes 22 miles through State Parks, beginning north of the designated West Lakeshore Trail. More proposed trails include the continuation of the Turtleback Trail in Truth or Consequences, trails through and south of Caballo Lake, riverside roads, and paths following dam service roads managed by EBID. To advance these projects, coordination with Truth or Consequences, State Parks, IBWC, and EBID is required.

UNDESIGNATED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
Williamsburg Connector (SR-06-A)	5.81	Sierra County - This long stretch of trail runs through State Park-managed land, north of Caballo Lake and towards the town of Williamsburg. Coordination with State Parks is required to advance designation.
Caballo Equestrian Trail (SR-06-B)	3.18	Sierra County – An alternate loop for equestrians who choose to venture closer to the river, rather than the direct connector to Williamsburg. The formal management of this loop through State Parks needs to be confirmed. While the Williamsburg connector winds through more open land, this Equestrian Trail runs closer to the river.
City of Elephant Butte Trail (SR-03-F)	0.37	Sierra County – A short connection from the City of Elephant Butte’s managed trail along Hwy 195, up to the Elephant Butte Westside Trails. This stretch needs to be ground-truthed, and management confirmation is required from State Parks.
Elephant Butte SP West Side Trail (SR-03-E, D)	0.96	Sierra County - A trail along the west shore of Elephant Butte, connecting from the City of Elephant Butte to the already designated West Lakeshore Trail. Management needs to be confirmed by State Parks.

FIGURE 7. SIERRA COUNTY



COUNTY SUMMARIES

DOÑA ANA COUNTY

9 miles of trail are designated in Doña Ana County – comprised of La Llorona Park and associated trails, Leasburg Dam State Park, and Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park.

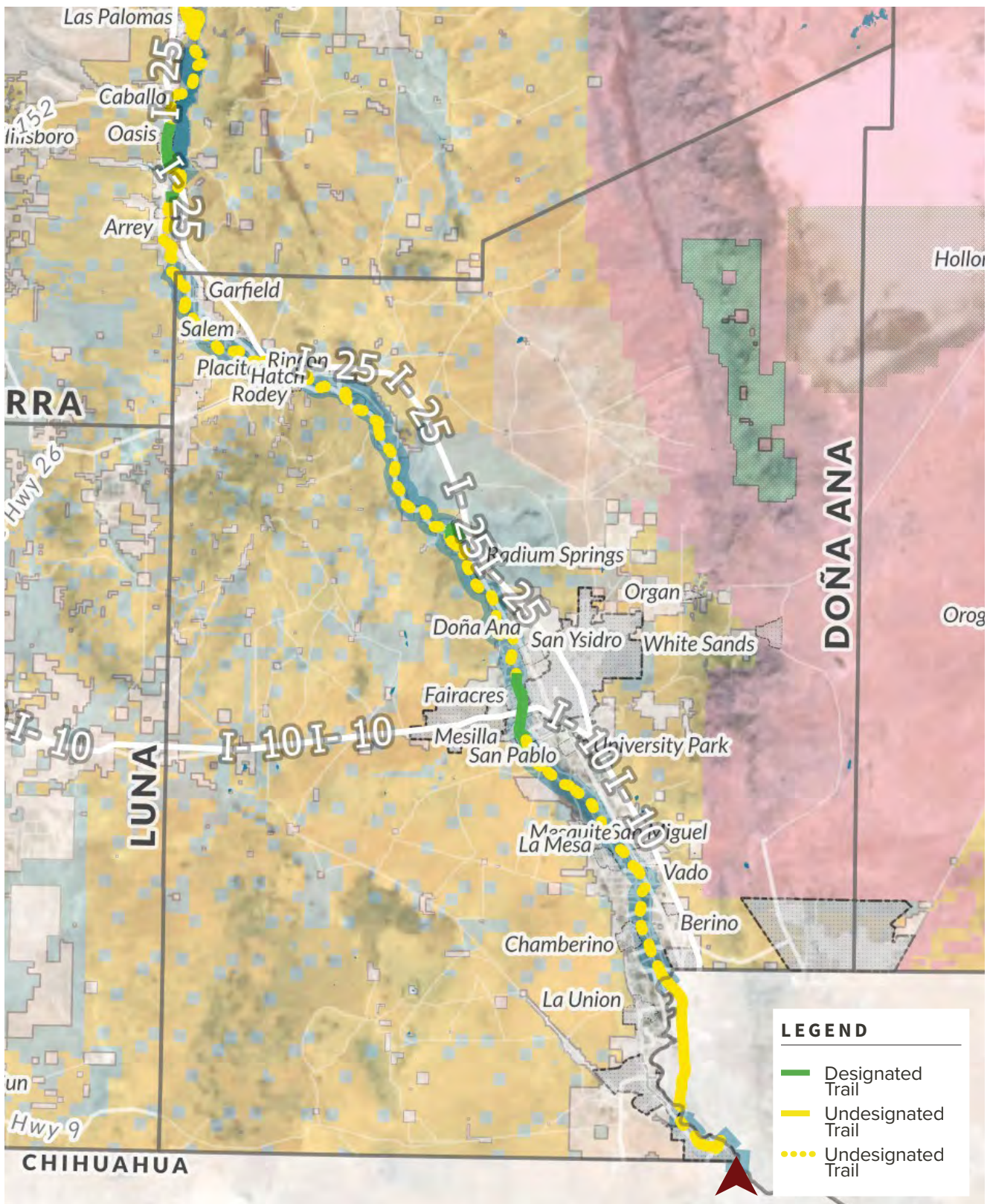
1.3 miles of trail are undesignated in Doña Ana County: Additionally, there is existing trail through El Paso County in Texas that could be utilized to connect other trail segments.

UNDESIGNATED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
El Paso, TX Trail (DA-17-B)	10.61	El Paso County, Texas - A long stretch of existing, paved trail managed by the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT). This connects the levee road near Anthony to Sunland Park. TXDOT has previously expressed support for the project.
Sunland Park: Rio Grande Trail in Flood Plain (DA-18-B)	1.32	Doña Ana County – This short stretch of existing trail runs on the North side of the Rio through Sunland Park. The trail is managed by the City of Sunland Park.

79 miles of trail are proposed in Doña Ana County: The majority of these miles are on levee roads controlled by the United States International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC).

PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENT	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
Levee Roads, Doña Ana County (DA 01-13)	49.73	The alignment follows roads and levees along the Rio, managed by the USIBWC. Conversations are ongoing with the USIBWC Realty Division to approve this road for recreational use. Further coordination with Doña Ana County and USIBWC is required to iron out MOUs for recreation use, liability, signage, and associated RGT designation.

FIGURE 8. DOÑA ANA COUNTY



ATTACHMENT E: SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT: ALIGNMENT RECOMMENDATION (SANTA FE COUNTY AND TAOS COUNTY CONNECTION)



Scope of Engagement: Rio Grande Trail – Alignment Recommendation (Santa Fe County to Taos County Segment)

1. Background

The Rio Grande Trail (RGT) is a statewide initiative to develop a long-distance, multi-use trail that follows the Rio Grande corridor, connecting communities, landscapes, and cultural heritage across New Mexico.

While an alignment has been identified for most of the trail, a critical gap remains between Santa Fe County and Taos County. Additionally, some of the proposed alignments within Santa Fe County are being reconsidered, especially within the context of identifying this new alignment.

A round of community engagement will focus on the **Santa Fe County to Taos County segment**. This critical link will extend the RGT northward and strengthen regional connectivity between two of New Mexico's most visited and culturally rich areas. Multiple alignment options have been identified in this area. Through a collaborative process, this project will evaluate these options, engage stakeholders and the public, and recommend a **preferred alignment** that balances technical feasibility with community priorities.

2. Objectives

- Facilitate meaningful community and stakeholder engagement within Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, and Taos Counties to inform alignment decisions.
- Ensure inclusion of diverse voices, including tribal governments, local communities, outdoor recreation advocates, non-recreation focused groups such as the agricultural community, land grant stakeholders, landowners, and underrepresented groups.
- Compare multiple alignment alternatives based on both **technical feasibility** (costs, environmental and cultural constraints), **recreational value** (connectivity to

other assets used by multiple user groups, i.e., foot, bike, equestrian, fish, climb, scenic value), and **public input** (community needs, equity, accessibility).

- Deliver a clear recommendation for a preferred alignment that advances the statewide vision of the RGT while addressing the unique context of this corridor.

3. Tasks & Approach

Phase 1: Project Initiation & Engagement Framework

- Conduct a project kickoff meeting with the Outdoor Recreation Division, the RGT Commission Alignment Committee, and key land management agency recreation staff who represent the areas where the proposed trail might pass through.
- Review existing studies, mapping, and prior planning efforts specific to the Santa Fe–Taos corridor.
- Develop a **Community Engagement Plan** tailored to the cultural, geographic, and demographic context of northern New Mexico.
- Create bilingual outreach materials (maps, FAQs, flyers, digital media) that frame the statewide RGT vision while emphasizing the Santa Fe to Taos segment.

Phase 2: Stakeholder Engagement

- Conduct two (2) small-group meetings with key stakeholders, including:
 - Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, and Taos County officials and planning staff
 - Tribal governments and pueblos within or adjacent to the corridor
 - Federal and state land management agencies (e.g., BLM, USFS, NMDOT, State Land Office)
 - Adjacent landowners, recreation groups, and local businesses
 - Non-recreation-oriented groups (agricultural and land grant stakeholders)
- Collaborate with the **RGT Commission Alignment Committee** to support the planning process.

Phase 3: Public Engagement

- Host two rounds of public engagement within the corridor communities:
 - **Round 1:** Introduce the project segment, present alignment options, gather feedback on opportunities, concerns, and community priorities.

- **Round 2:** Present refined alignment options with technical evaluation results and solicit feedback on the preferred alternative.
- Launch an **online interactive map and survey** for community members unable to attend in-person meetings.
- Provide interpretation and translation services and offer virtual participation options to ensure broad and equitable access.

Phase 4: Technical Evaluation

- Conduct a **comparative analysis** of the alignment options within the Santa Fe–Taos corridor, assessing:
 - Estimated construction and maintenance costs
 - Potential funding mechanisms and partnerships
 - Environmental, cultural, and historic sensitivities unique to the area
 - Connectivity to local trail systems, public lands, and community destinations
 - Feasibility based on terrain, land ownership, and regulatory considerations
- Develop an alignment evaluation matrix integrating both technical analysis and public/stakeholder input.

Phase 5: Recommendation & Documentation

- Prepare a **Community Engagement Summary Report** documenting outreach methods, participation levels, and key themes.
- Develop a comparative evaluation of alternatives, highlighting the integration of technical feasibility with community values.
- Recommend a **preferred alignment for the Santa Fe–Taos segment**, supported by transparent criteria.
- Deliver findings in a written report and present results to the client, Rio Grande Trail Commission, and local communities.

4. Deliverables

- Santa Fe–Taos segment Community Engagement Plan
- Outreach and communication materials (print, digital, bilingual)
- Meeting summaries and participation data
- Online survey and interactive map results

- Alignment evaluation matrix (technical + community input)
- Final report with recommended alignment for the Santa Fe–Taos segment
- Presentation to client, Rio Grande Trail Commission, and corridor communities

5. Schedule (6 months)

- **Month 1:** Project kickoff, background review, engagement plan, outreach materials
- **Months 2–3:** Stakeholder engagement, Advisory Committee, Round 1 public engagement
- **Month 4:** Technical evaluation, online survey, mapping, targeted outreach sessions
- **Month 5:** Round 2 public engagement, synthesis of findings
- **Month 6:** Final report and presentation of preferred alignment

DRAFT

ATTACHMENT F: TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION - HORSETHIEF MESA TRAIL





TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: TS-01-F

Date of Submittal: August 22, 2025
Submittal to: RGT Commission

Approval Date (RGT Commission):

Applicant Information

Name/Title: Bradley Higdon, BLM (Bureau of Land Management), Rio Grande del Norte National Monument - bhigdon@blm.gov
Assistant Field Manager (Recreation)

Land Owner / Land Manager (Check which applies)

Accessibility

Public Access:

Yes / No / With permit

User Groups:

Hikers / Bikers / Equestrians

Surfacing:

Paved / Unpaved

Grades/Tread: Moderate inclines and declines

Traffic Flow: Light to Moderate: emerging recreational area

Barriers: Access to the trail is in development; it does not currently connect directly with other RGT segments

Signage: Trailhead facilities and signage are in development

Features: Views of the river gorge and the adjacent mountain ranges

Designation Type

Interim/ Full Designation (Check which applies)



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: TS-01-F

(Note: Interim Designation is for proposed future trail segments; Full Designation is for existing/constructed trail segments.)

RGT Segment for Designation (for future identification purposes)

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
Taos	BLM	TS-01-F	Backcountry Trail	Horsethief Mesa Trail	5.85	Undesignated
				Total	5.85	

Location/Description

Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.

The Rio Grande Trail (RGT) alignment for this section of trail through Taos County and the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument includes portions of the existing Horsethief Trail Loop Trail—see Attachment F. This segment of the trail for designation begins just north of County Road B-007 and the community of Arroyo Hondo. It begins on the mesa and continues north on the east side of the Rio Grande along the rim of the gorge. It continues to the boundary of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and Carson National Forest.

While the trail is physically close to the John Dunn Bridge as the crow flies, a significant grade difference separates this trail and the bridge. However, a new trail connection between the Horsethief Mesa Trail segment and John Dunn Bridge, referred to as the Horsethief Connector, is specifically provided for in the Monument Management Plan completed by the BLM in December 2024. A tentative route has been identified, and resource surveys have been conducted on this connector trail to ensure it would avoid impacts to important cultural and natural resources.

The Horsethief Mesa area recently received improvements and investment in partnership with the Enchanted Circle Trails Association. This was the result of a comprehensive Travel Management Plan completed in 2021. In 2024, this area received funding for improvements to access and parking. Therefore, it is uniquely prepared for designation.

RGT Vision



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: TS-01-F

How does this segment support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail?

The Horsethief Trail RGT segment designation would substantially support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail. The segment would consist of nearly 6 miles of existing scenic trail located adjacent to the river. This trail is already a beloved community asset where the community explores and learns about the unique functions the river provides. It contributes to cultural and environmental awareness, healthy lifestyles, and spiritual growth by providing access to the great outdoors in an existing national monument.

Ownership

Is the segment in public ownership, or are necessary easements or agreements in place? If not, describe the plan for obtaining and/or managing trail right-of-way.

This segment (TS-01-F) is on public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). It is located entirely within the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument.

Public Support

Please indicate whether there has been any public outreach and whether there are any groups, organizations, or individuals that have demonstrated support for this trail segment.

The area where this trail is located received significant study and analysis in the 2021 Horsethief Mesa Travel Management Plan (TMP), which evaluated an area of 2,060.5 acres within the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument. As a result of this study, a transportation network of motorized and non-motorized routes was designated with broad support of the public. This plan was prepared with an environmental assessment (EA) through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process with substantial public participation (e.g., public scoping input and comments on the draft EA). The Enchanted Circle Trails Association, a highly active trail advocacy organization in the area, was a key partner in the plan's successful development and completion.

Connectivity

Describe how this trail segment would provide continuity and/or connectivity within the overall Rio Grande Trail system.

The Horsethief Trail is located south of the proposed trail segment TS-01-E through Garrapata Canyon to the north and the Horsethief Connector to the south. The trail itself is just north of the John Dunn Bridge and Taos County Road B-007.



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: TS-01-F

This segment is an essential connection in Taos County. The surrounding area already includes many sections of designated trail. By designating this portion, Taos County is one step closer to being the first county in New Mexico with all proposed segments being fully designated.

Impact Studies

Have environmental impact studies and/or cultural surveys been conducted to understand the potential negative impacts of trail designation? How will impacts be addressed or mitigated? (Required for full designation, optional for interim designation)

The 2021 Travel Management Plan (TMP) for Horsethief Mesa included significant attention to environmental and cultural impact. The plan was approved, and implementation has begun. Designation of the RGT through this area aligns with and complements the goals of this plan.

The BLM will continue to monitor potential impacts to the Monument values from recreational trail use and will work with the RGT Commission and agency partners to mitigate those impacts as necessary.

Capacity to Maintain

How will the trail segment be maintained, and by whom?

As indicated, this existing trail is located within a National Monument managed by the BLM. It is a BLM system trail and will continue to be maintained by the BLM with the ready support of agency partners.

Public Safety

Indicate how public safety concerns will be addressed.

This existing trail is located within an existing National Monument managed by the BLM and will continue to be maintained by the BLM with support of its partners. This area also falls within the policing authority of the Taos County Sheriff's Office, as well as the New Mexico State Police.



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: TS-01-F

Additional Documentation

Please provide any supporting documentation that would help the Commission evaluate your request as a separate attachment.

Attachment G: Map of the trail segment

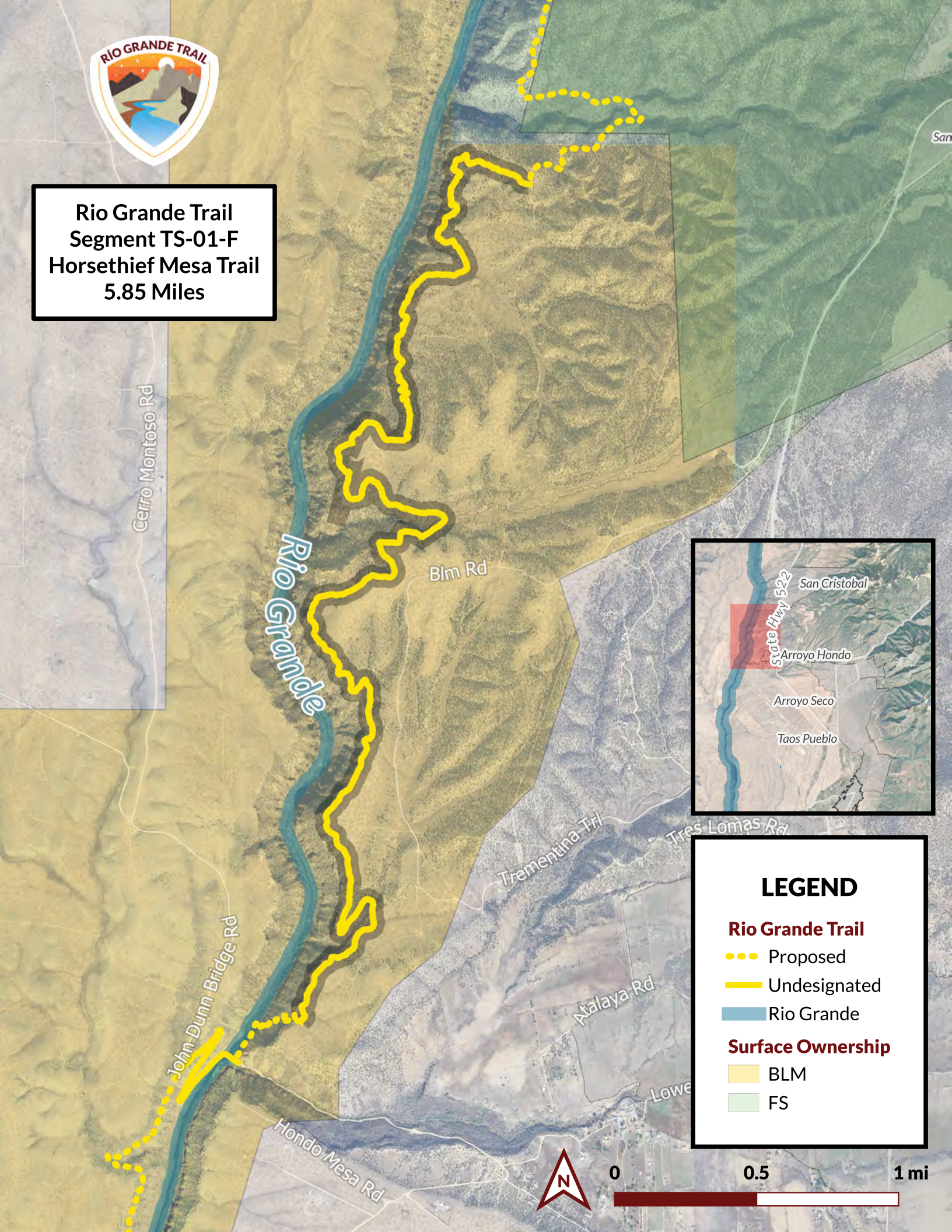
Attachment H: Letter of Support from the BLM

ATTACHMENT G: MAP OF HORSETHIEF MESA TRAIL TRAIL SEGMENT FOR DESIGNATION





**Rio Grande Trail
Segment TS-01-F
Horsethief Mesa Trail
5.85 Miles**



LEGEND

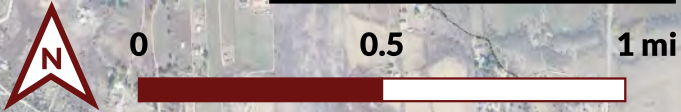
Rio Grande Trail

- Proposed
- Undesignated

Rio Grande

Surface Ownership

- BLM
- FS



ATTACHMENT H: BLM LETTER OF SUPPORT - HORSETHIEF MESA TRAIL





United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Farmington District
Taos Field Office
1024 Paseo del Pueblo sur
Taos, NM 87571
<https://www.blm.gov/new-mexico>

August 22, 2025

In Reply Refer To:
1220 (NMF02)

RE: BLM Support for Horsethief Mesa Trail to be Added to Rio Grande Trail Alignment

Dear Rio Grande Trail Commission Members:

The Bureau of Land Management - Taos Field Office (BLM) is pleased to support the continued development and implementation of the Rio Grande Trail and specifically the designation of the existing Horsethief Mesa Trail as part of the Rio Grande Trail alignment. The Horsethief Mesa Trail segment, approximately 6 miles in length, consists of a scenic single-track alignment along the rim of the Rio Grande Gorge within Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and would be a worthy addition to the long-distance trail.

The Rio Grande Trail represents an extraordinary opportunity to enhance recreation, connectivity, and economic development across New Mexico. It serves not only as a recreational corridor for hiking, biking, and equestrian use, but also as a vital cultural and ecological asset that connects communities along the Rio Grande.

Completing and improving the trail—including the Horsethief Mesa Trail segment—would provide residents with expanded access to safe, accessible outdoor spaces and create new opportunities for tourism, education, and small business growth. Local and statewide stakeholders have demonstrated interest in trail development, and investing in this infrastructure aligns with broader goals around climate resilience, public health, and community development.

I fully support the adoption of the Horsethief Mesa Trail segment and urge all relevant agencies and partners to prioritize its advancement as part of the Rio Grande Trail.

Sincerely,

Brad Higdon
Assistant Field Manager (Recreation)

ATTACHMENT I: TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION - CAMINO REAL: SANTA FE RIVER TO CAMINO DE REY RD





TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: SF-03-B

Date of Submittal: 6/13/2025
Submittal to: RGT Commission

Approval Date (RGT Commission):

Applicant Information

Name/Title: City of Santa Fe
Name/Title: Santa Fe County

Email:

Land Owner / Land Manager (Check which applies)

If additional applicants:

Name/Title:

Email:

Land Owner / Land Manager (Check which applies)

Accessibility

Public Access:

Yes / No / With permit

User Groups:

Hikers / Bikers / Equestrians

Surfacing:

Paved / Unpaved

Grades/Tread: Relatively moderate.

Traffic Flow: Moderate usage due to its proximity to a major metropolitan area.

Barriers: N/A

Signage: No signage along the trail.

Features: Nearby trailhead and recreation complex which includes bathrooms and parking.



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: SF-03-B

Designation Type

Interim/ Full Designation (Check which applies)

(Note: Interim Designation is for proposed future trail segments; Full Designation is for existing/constructed trail segments.)

RGT Segment for Designation (for future identification purposes)

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
Santa Fe	Santa Fe County	SF-03-B	Paved	El Camino Real Trail	3.36	Undesignated
				Total	3.36	

Location/Description

Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.

This section of the trail begins on the north bank of the Santa Fe River, .66 miles from the El Camino Real Trailhead in Santa Fe. This is where the paved portion of the Camino Real trail begins. The segment continues north, paved, for 3.36 miles. This section goes through unincorporated Santa Fe County jurisdiction.

The trail connects to the Municipal Recreation Complex, and the Marty Sanchez Links De Santa Fe. The trail runs over the Arroyo de Los Frijoles and the Arroyo de Las Calabasas. Back at the beginning of the trail segment, at the Santa Fe River, this segment will connect to the in-construction Santa Fe River Trail.

RGT Vision

How does this segment support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail?

This trail segment connects the Santa Fe metro area, the third largest population center in the state, and the state capital to the Caja del Rio Plateau. It is also low impact, as it utilizes existing trails. The majority of this existing trail is also designated as the historic Camino Real heritage trail, connecting people to the



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: SF-03-B

history of this area. The Caja del Rio has been identified as an area of natural significance. Adding the trail to this area could increase support for additional protections.

Ownership

Is the segment in public ownership, or are necessary easements or agreements in place? If not, describe the plan for obtaining and/or managing trail right-of-way.

The segment SF-03-B is fully located on county land. Currently, Santa Fe County maintains this trail.

Public Support

Please indicate whether there has been any public outreach and whether there are any groups, organizations, or individuals that have demonstrated support for this trail segment.

Multiple meetings have been held with key stakeholders, including land managers and adjacent property owner groups (Las Campanas), regarding this segment. Plus, its existing nature as a paved trail connecting to multiple civic amenities implies a process of engagement behind each of those other projects.

Connectivity

Describe how this trail segment would provide continuity and/or connectivity within the overall Rio Grande Trail system.

This section of the trail would reconnect users from the Santa Fe River, connecting to a trails network that goes to the Rio Grande itself. As it stands, there is no extension of the trail proposed north from the Caja del Rio.

Impact Studies

Have environmental impact studies and/or cultural surveys been conducted to understand the potential negative impacts of trail designation? How will impacts be addressed or mitigated? (Required for full designation, optional for interim designation)

This existing trail went through a public process when it was constructed and designated as the El Camino Real. In the process of designating this existing trail as the Rio Grande Trail, various land



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments: SF-03-B

managers and stakeholders have been engaged, including the adjacent neighborhood Las Campanas, Santa Fe County Open Space, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. The Rio Grande Trail, through its master plan process, also included significant public engagement.

Capacity to Maintain

How will the trail segment be maintained, and by whom?

Through the designation process, no change to the existing maintenance agreement on the existing trail is anticipated.

The long-term vision for the entire Rio Grande Trail is that a non-profit would be created to support trail maintenance and management. However, in the meantime, maintenance would be completed by the existing entities maintaining the trail.

Public Safety

Indicate how public safety concerns will be addressed.

There are not currently any public safety concerns for this section of the trail.

1. Additional Documentation

Please provide any supporting documentation that would help the Commission evaluate your request as a separate attachment.

Camino Real Trail Map, Santa Fe County

ATTACHMENT J: CAMINO DE REY TRAIL SEGMENT MAP





Rio Grande Trail Segment SF-03-B Caja Del Rio Rd. Trail 3.36 Miles

LEGEND

Rio Grande Trail

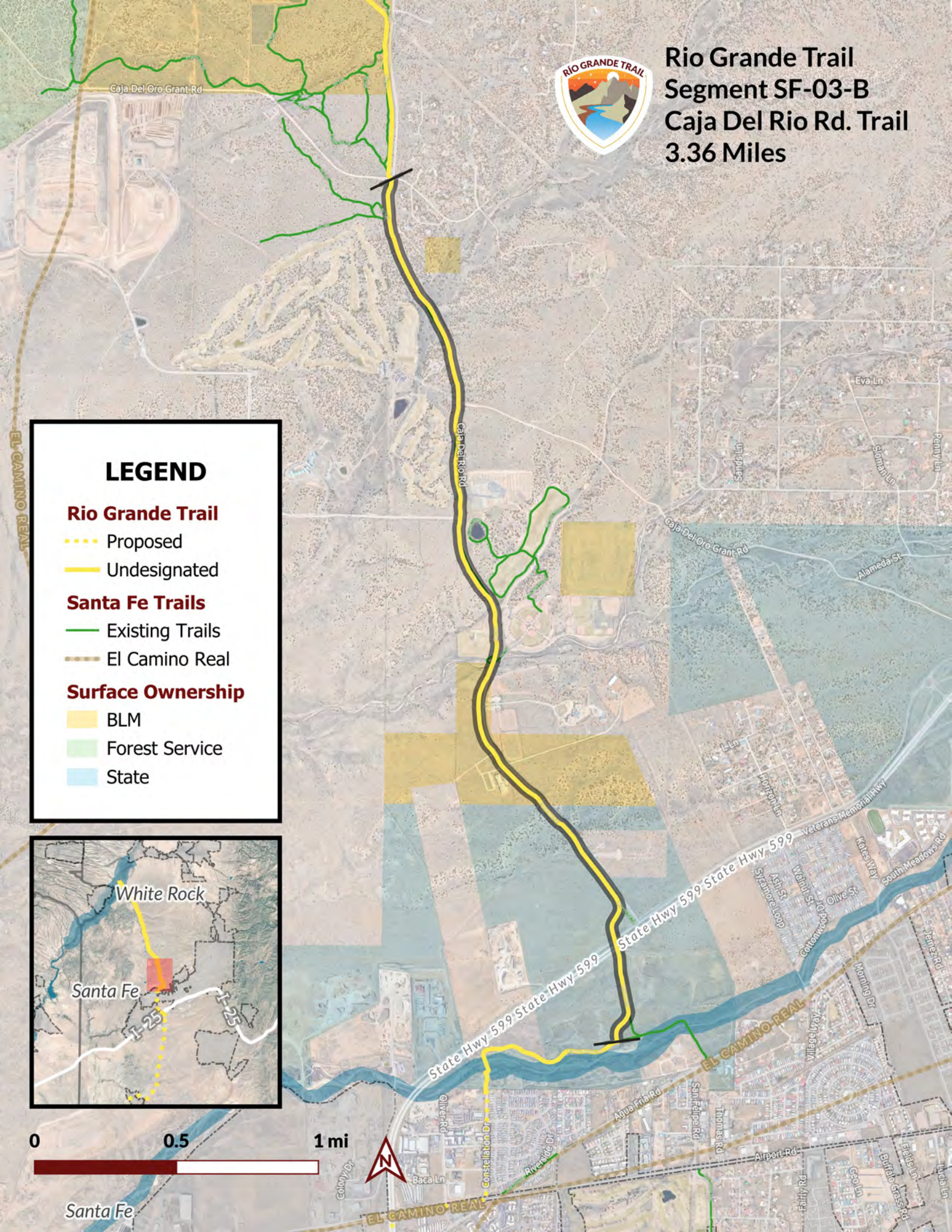
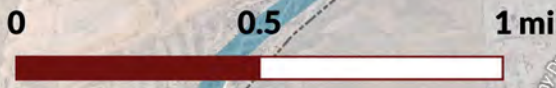
- Proposed
- Undesignated

Santa Fe Trails

- Existing Trails
- El Camino Real

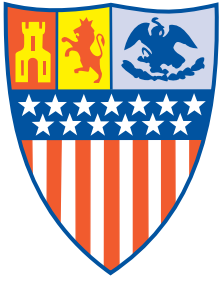
Surface Ownership

- BLM
- Forest Service
- State



ATTACHMENT K: CITY OF SANTA FE LETTER OF SUPPORT - CAMINO REAL: SANTA FE RIVER TO CAMINO DE REY RD





City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

200 Lincoln Avenue, P.O. Box 909, Santa Fe, N.M. 87504-0909
www.santafenm.gov

Alan Webber, Mayor

Councilors:

Signe I. Lindell, Mayor Pro Tem, District 1

Alma G. Castro, District 1

Michael J. Garcia, District 2

Carol Romero-Wirth, District 2

Lee Garcia, District 3

Pilar F.H. Faulkner, District 3

Jamie Cassutt, District 4

Amanda Chavez, District 4

August 25, 2025

To the Board of County Commissioners:

I support the proposed designation of the El Camino Real Trail segment in Santa Fe County as part of the Rio Grande Trail. This effort represents a meaningful step in strengthening regional connectivity and advancing New Mexico's outdoor recreation economy.

The Rio Grande Trail is envisioned as a statewide asset that enhances access to outdoor spaces, supports non-motorized travel, and fosters tourism and community health. Recognizing the El Camino Real segment as part of this system aligns with the City's goals of improving connectivity for residents and visitors while contributing to the broader outdoor economy.

This designation will elevate the trail's visibility as a recreational, cultural, and economic resource. With thoughtful coordination among state, county, and city partners, it can further strengthen the regional trail network and expand opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

Sincerely,

Melissa McDonald

Melissa McDonald
Parks and Open Space Division Director
505-303-9502

ATTACHMENT L: TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION APPLICATION





TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments:

Date of Submittal:
Submittal to: RGT Commission

Approval Date (RGT Commission):

Applicant Information

Name/Title:
Name/Title:

Email:
 Land Owner / Land Manager (Check which applies) / Other

If additional applicants:

Name/Title:
Email:
 Land Owner / Land Manager (Check which applies) / Other

Access

Public Access:
 Yes / No / With permit

User Groups (if not open to all the below groups, note alternate accommodation for those groups in the "Connectivity" section of the application):

Hikers / Bikers / Equestrians

Surfacing:
 Paved / Unpaved / Blue (water)

Universal Design/ADA Accessible:
 Yes / No / Partial

Difficulty:
 Easy (mostly flat & smooth) / Moderate (some elevation change) /
 Difficult (significant elevation change)

Traffic Flow:



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments:

Barriers:

Signage:

Features:

Designation Type

Proposed / Full Designation of through trail / Full Designation of spur trail (Check which applies)

(Note: Proposed Designation is for proposed future trail segments; Full Designation is for existing/constructed trail segments.)

RGT Segment for Designation (for future identification purposes)

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
				Total		

Location/Description

Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.

RGT Vision

How does this segment support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail?

Ownership

Is the segment in public ownership, or are necessary easements or agreements in place? If not, describe the plan for obtaining and/or managing the trail right-of-way.

Public Support



TRAIL SEGMENT DESIGNATION PROCESS & APPLICATION

RGT Segments:

Please indicate whether there has been any public outreach and whether there are any groups, organizations, or individuals that have demonstrated support for this trail segment.

Connectivity

Describe how this trail segment would provide continuity and/or connectivity within the overall Rio Grande Trail system.

Impact Studies

Have environmental impact studies and/or cultural surveys been conducted to understand the potential impacts of trail designation? How may the impacts support existing efforts, community visions, or regional planning? (Required for full designation, optional for proposed designation)

Capacity to Maintain

How will the trail segment be maintained, and by whom?

Public Safety

Indicate how public safety will be addressed.

Additional Documentation

Please provide any supporting documentation that would help the Commission evaluate your request as a separate attachment. This could include maps of the proposed route for designation, letters of support, resolutions from the respective municipality or county, existing planning studies, easement documentation, pictures of the trail, etc.

ATTACHMENT M: TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION





TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments:

Date of Submittal:
Submittal to: RGT Commission

Approval Date (RGT Commission):

Applicant Information for Proposed New Alignment

Name/Title:
Name/Title:

Email:
 Land Owner / Land Manager (Check which applies) / Other

If additional applicants:

Name/Title:
Email:
 Land Owner / Land Manager (Check which applies) / Other

Accessibility

Public Access:
 Yes / No / With permit

User Groups (if not open to all the below groups, note alternate accommodation for those groups in the "Connectivity" section of the application):

Hikers / Bikers / Equestrians

Surfacing:
 Paved / Unpaved / Blue (water)

Universal Design/ADA Accessible:
 Yes / No / Partial

Difficulty:
 Easy (mostly flat & smooth) / Moderate (some elevation change) /
 Difficult (significant elevation change)

Traffic Flow:



TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments:

Barriers:

Signage:

Features:

Designation Type

Proposed / Full Designation of through trail / Full Designation of spur trail (Check which applies)

(Note: Proposed Designation is for proposed future trail segments; Full Designation is for existing/constructed trail segments.)

RGT Segment for Designation (for future identification purposes)

County	Jurisdiction	Segments	Existing Facility	Existing Facility Name	Miles	Application Type
				Total		

Location/Description of Current Alignment

Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.

Location/Description of Proposed New Alignment

Please describe the boundaries, extent, and relative location of the proposed new alignment of this trail segment and how it relates to the Rio Grande Trail Corridor.

Reason for New Alignment

Please describe the reasons for realigning this trail segment.



TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments:

RGT Vision

How does this segment support the vision of the Rio Grande Trail?

Ownership

Is the segment in public ownership, or are necessary easements or agreements in place? If not, describe the plan for obtaining and/or managing trail right-of-way.

Public Support

Please indicate whether there has been any public outreach and whether there are any groups, organizations, or individuals that have demonstrated support for this trail segment.

Connectivity

Describe how this trail segment would provide continuity and/or connectivity within the overall Rio Grande Trail system.

Accessibility

What level of access/accessibility is anticipated for the general public and different user groups?

Impact Studies

Have environmental impact studies and/or cultural surveys been conducted to understand the potential impacts of trail designation? How may the impacts support existing efforts, community visions, or regional planning? (Required for full designation, optional for proposed designation)

Capacity to Maintain

How will the trail segment be maintained, and by whom?

Public Safety

Indicate how public safety will be addressed.



TRAIL SEGMENT REALIGNMENT APPLICATION

RGT Segments:

1. Additional Documentation

Please provide any supporting documentation that would help the Commission evaluate your request as a separate attachment. This could include maps of the proposed route for designation, letters of support, resolutions from the respective municipality or county, existing planning studies, easement documentation, pictures of the trail, etc.

ATTACHMENT N: LETTER OF SUPPORT TEMPLATE





RIO GRANDE TRAIL - LETTER OF SUPPORT

Your Name

Your Title / Organization

Address: City, State, ZIP

Email

Phone

Date

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express support for the continued development and implementation of the Rio Grande Trail (RGT) and specifically for the advancement and designation of the following segment: **INSERT SEGMENT NAME OR LOCATION HERE.**

The RGT represents an extraordinary opportunity to enhance recreation, connectivity, and economic development across New Mexico. It serves not only as a recreational corridor for hiking, biking, and equestrian use but also as a vital cultural and ecological asset. This trail celebrates the Rio Grande, the lifeblood of New Mexico, and a river course that inspires and shapes our communities, cultures, and landscapes. The RGT provides a physical connection to protect, celebrate, and honor the river.

Completing and improving the trail—including **INSERT SEGMENT**—will provide residents with expanded access to safe, accessible outdoor spaces and create new opportunities for tourism, education, and small business growth. Local and statewide stakeholders have demonstrated interest in trail development, and investing in this infrastructure aligns with broader goals around climate resilience, public health, and community development.

I fully support the development of the **INSERT SEGMENT** and urge all relevant agencies, partners, and funders to prioritize its advancement as part of the Rio Grande Trail.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Title

Organization

X

John Doe

ATTACHMENT O: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PLAN PRESENTATION





Legislative Subcommittee

Instruction Guide for Preparation of an FY 26 Program Management Plan (PgMP)

September 19, 2025



RIO GRANDE TRAIL MAP



Tucker Davidson
Myron Temchin

HAFC/H 2 AND 3, aa - Page 206:

(128)ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT:

The period of time for expending the two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$225,000) appropriated from the general fund in Subsection 101 of Section 5 of Chapter 69 of Laws 2024 for development of the Rio Grande trail commission is extended through fiscal year 2026.

A Project Management Plan will assist each RGTC Subcommittee and Working Groups to keep focused on complying with these New Mexico mandates.

Benefits of a Program Management Plan (PgMP)

- **COMPLIANCE: to focus RGTC Subcommittees on New Mexico regulatory & funding requirements;**
 - 2015, HB 563 – RGT Vision
 - NMSA 1978m Section 9-SC-1
 - Master Plan Goals
 - General Appropriation Act of 2025
- **COLLABORATION: to ensure a voluntary process; tribal consultation and engagement; and federal coordination and technical support**
- **EFFICIENCY: to work collaboratively in a timely and cost-efficient manner to accomplish planned and well-defined WORK goals and objectives:**
 - Ensure a voluntary process
 - Use existing trails along Rio Grand corridor
 - Minimize environmental impacts
 - Preserve sensitive habitats
 - Prioritize non-motorized use
- **ACCOUNTABILITY: to measure, evaluate and report actual WORK products against planned Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to define opportunities for continuous improvement**


Components of Program Management Plan

Summary Level of Program Management Plan Primary Components		
PMP Component	Name	Primary Management Plan Definition
Scope of Work	What do we want to do?	A detailed document outlining the specific tasks and activities, for a project or piece of work. A series of steps to be carried out or goals to be accomplished. A definition of what is included and excluded from the project, providing a roadmap for execution and ensuring all stakeholders are aligned on the project's goals and objectives. What the project aims to achieve and the steps involved in completing the project. Development of a detailed Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)
Schedule	What is the key timeline?	The task-by-task, activity-by-activity definition of start-finish dates, personnel levels of effort, key activity checkpoints and completion dates; and pre-requisite/co-requisite relationships for each WBS activity.
Performance/Deliverables	How is the Work done? By who?	A definition of resources required, organization structure; who is responsible for what? Clarification of the project's boundaries, ensuring that everyone involved understands what is expected of them and what is not. What are the tangible outputs or results of the project? What are the appropriate performance methodologies? What are their evaluation metrics?
Cost Estimate	What is my Budget and how much will the work cost?	What is the level of information accuracy? Using the baseline of information, what is the final cost for the performance of the work? What is the level of accuracy and resulting cost estimate? How does the cost estimate compare with the Project Budget/ funding?
Challenges & Risk	How will the project change?	What are the known and unknown challenges and risks associated with the Work? Have the mitigation and/or elimination strategies been evaluated? Are the costs of mitigation or impacts of matured risk included in the cost estimate? How will risk impact on scope, schedule and cost be managed and reported?

If the PMP creation effort is approved to Plan FY 2026 RGTC work efforts, specific work description templates will be created for each Subcommittee and Work Group to complete so that an integrated PMP can be prepared.

SUMMARY: PLAN the WORK.....and WORK the PLAN

DRAFT Table of Contents - Program Management Plan (PgMP)

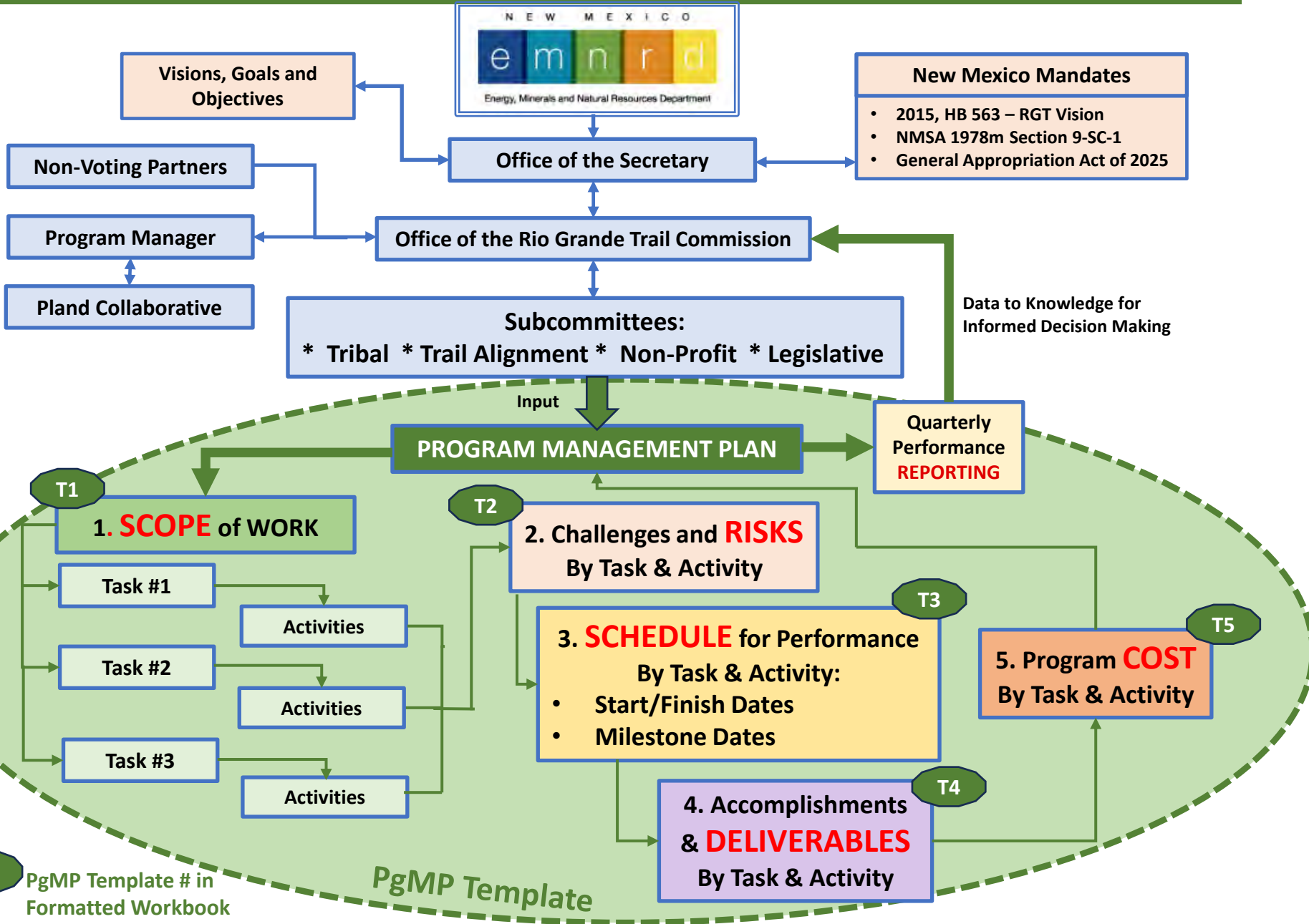
 New Mexico Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department Office of the Rio Grande Trails Commission FY 26 Program Management Plan		
Section	Title	Page No.
1	THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL VISION	
1.1	The Vision	
1.2	The Planning Framework	
1.3	Goals of the Master Plan	
1.4	Rio Grande Trail Master Plan Timeline	
1.5	Trail Uses and Context	
1.6	The Rio Grande Trail Value Proposition	
2	RIO GRANDE TRAIL SEGMENTS	
2.1	Current Segments and Alignment	
2.2	Trail Segments to be Prioritized for FY26	
2.3	Revised Designation Application	
2.4	New Realignment Application	
2.5	Letter of Support Template	
3	OFFICE OF THE RIO GRANDE TRAIL COMMISSION	
3.1	Authorization	
3.2	Organization Structure	
3.3	Roles and Responsibilities	
3.4	Subcommittee Purpose Statements	
3.5	Quarterly Meetings	
3.6	Outreach to the Public	
3.7	Integrated Program Schedule	
3.8	Integrated Program Budget	
3.9	Integrated Risk and Mitigation Strategy	
4	TRIBAL SUBCOMMITTEE	
4.1	Scope of Work	
4.2	Challenges, Risks and Mitigation Strategy	
4.3	Schedule of Performance	
4.4	Expected Deliverables	
4.5	Budget for Execution	
5	ALIGNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE	
5.1	Scope of Work	
5.2	Challenges, Risks and Mitigation Strategy	
5.3	Schedule of Performance	
5.4	Expected Deliverables	
5.5	Budget for Execution	

 New Mexico Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department Office of the Rio Grande Trails Commission FY 26 Program Management Plan		
Section	Title	Page No.
6	NON-PROFIT SUBCOMMITTEE	
6.1	Scope of Work	
6.2	Challenges, Risks and Mitigation Strategy	
6.3	Schedule of Performance	
6.4	Expected Deliverables	
6.5	Budget for Execution	
7	LEGISLATION SUBCOMMITTEE	
7.1	Scope of Work	
7.2	Challenges, Risks and Mitigation Strategy	
7.3	Schedule of Performance	
7.4	Expected Deliverables	
7.5	Budget for Execution	
8	REPORTING	



See Separate EXAMPLE Legislative Subcommittee Completed Template Attached

5 – Step Subcommittee Templated Process To Develop PgMP



1. Purpose & Scope of Work Template

Subcommittee:

Chairman:

Date of Submittal:

Purpose Statement and Scope of Work: *Provide Purpose Statement similar to that presented in ATTACHMENT B of the June 13, 2025 Meeting. (100 words +/-):*

Task and Activity Description: *Describe the top 3 TASKS and associated ACTIVITIES within each Task this Subcommittee is planning to accomplish in FY 26.*

Task #1: *This will become the summary TASK Name for use in all other Document references: (10 words +/-)*

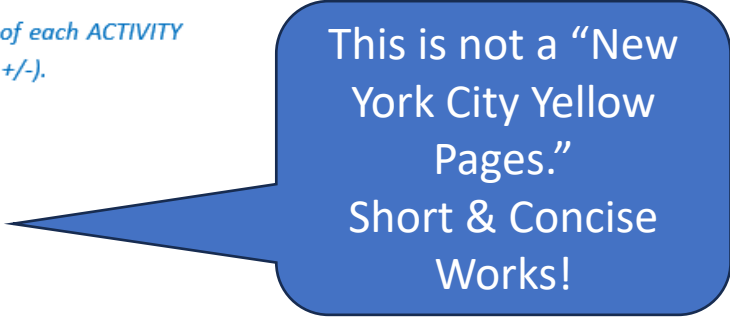
- **Task #1 Description:** *This will become the definition of this TASK for use in all other Document references: (100 words +/-).*
- **Task #1 – Activities #1 Description:** *This will become the definition of each ACTIVITY within each TASK for use in all other Document references: (50 words +/-).*
- **Task #1 – Activities #2 Description:**
- **Task #1 – Activities #3 Description:**

Task #2: *(10 words +/-)*

- **Task #2 Description:** *(100 words +/-).*
- **Task #2 – Activities #1 Description:** *(50 words +/-).*
- **Task #2 – Activities #2 Description:**
- **Task #2 – Activities #3 Description:**

Task #3: *(10 words +/-)*

- **Task #3 Description:** *(100 words +/-).*
- **Task #3 – Activities #1 Description:** *(50 words +/-).*
- **Task #3 – Activities #2 Description:**
- **Task #3 – Activities #3 Description:**



This is not a “New York City Yellow Pages.”
Short & Concise Works!

2. Challenges & Risk Work Template

DEFINITION OF TASK AND ACTIVITY CHALLENGES AND/OR RISKS: *Describe the known and/or envisioned CHALLENGES and/or RISKS and mitigation strategies that may be encountered and performed from the implementation of the top 3 TASKS and 3 ACTIVITIES within each Task this Subcommittee is planning to accomplish in FY 26.*

Task # 1:

- Risk, Mitigation Activity 1-1:
- Risk, Mitigation Activity 1-2:
- Risk, Mitigation Activity 1-3:

Task #2:

- Risk, Mitigation Activity 2-1:
- Risk, Mitigation Activity 2-2:
- Risk, Mitigation Activity 2-3:

Task #3:

- Risk, Mitigation Activity 3-1:
- Risk, Mitigation Activity 3-2:
- Risk, Mitigation Activity 3-3:

Present additional Challenge/Risk and Mitigation discussions as appropriate:

3. Schedule of Performance – Tabular Work Template

SCHEDULING GROUND RULES: (1) Identify approximate start and finish dates. For each Task and Activity; (2) Identify any milestone dates (key dates) that must be complied with.



Task /Act. #	Task Name	Activity Name/Description	Milestone ? Y/N	Start Date	Finish Date	Comment # Below
1-1						
1-2						
1-3						
2-1						
2-2						
2-3						
3-1						
3-2						
3-3						

COMMENTS: Provide any special comments associated with special conditions and/or understandings defining/impacting the schedule of defined Tasks and Activities included in your Subcommittee’s Work efforts:

- Comment No. 1:

- Comment No. 2:

- Comment No. 3:

4. Accomplishment & Deliverables Template

Task #1: *This is the summary TASK Name for use in all other Document references: (10 words +/-)*

- **Task #1 – Activities #1 Deliverable Description:** (50 words +/-).
- **Task #1 – Activities #2 Deliverable Description:**
- **Task #1 – Activities #3 Deliverable Description:**

Task #2:

- **Task #2 – Activities #1 Deliverable Description:**
- **Task #2 – Activities #2 Deliverable Description:**
- **Task #2 – Activities #3 Deliverable Description:**

Task #3:

- **Task #3 – Activities #1 Deliverable Description:**
- **Task #3 – Activities #2 Deliverable Description:**
- **Task #3 – Activities #3 Deliverable Description:**

Present additional Task and Activity deliverables as appropriate:

5. Cost Estimate for FY 2026 Expenditures

COST ESTIMATING GROUND RULES: (1) * Include cost to mitigate risk as appropriate; (2) Other Direct Costs may include Trail Management Workshops, signage on designated trail segments, trail maintenance & development (fencing, gates, etc.):

Task/ Act. #	Task Name	Activity Name/ Description	Equipment/ Materials (\$)	Travel & Living (\$)	Other Direct Costs* (\$)	Subcontractor Service Costs (\$)	Total Activity Cost
1-1							
1-2							
1-3							
Comments Task #1:							
2-1							
2.2							
2-3							
Comments Task #2:							
3-1							
3-2							
3-3							
Comments Task #3:							
SUBTOTAL ESTIMATED COST (\$):							
						ESTIMATED TOTAL COST (\$):	

Attach additional sheets as appropriate.

PgMP Development Tools

To develop each Subcommittee's Program Management Plan information submittals, refer to the following additional **TOOLS**:

1. Microsoft "WORD" formatted PgMP Questionnaire Template, and
2. The Legislative Subcommittee's EXAMPLE substantially completed WORD Template.

Please feel free to contact Commissioner, Myron Temchin of the Legislative Subcommittee for additional support at (626) 824-2778 or mstemchin@aol.com

LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE **EXAMPLE**
WORK IN PROGRESS

1. Purpose & Scope of Work Template - EXAMPLE

Subcommittee: Legislative

Chairman: Tucker Davidson

Date of Submittal: July 2025

Purpose Statement and Scope of Work: Champion and support legislative efforts related to the Rio Grande Trail. This committee will help guide, recommend, and advance legislative actions needed to implement the trail, support its development, and build long-term capacity.

Task and Activity Description:

Task #1: Provide limited liability for Special Districts by amending the State Trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978)

- **Task #1 Description:** Develop amendment language in the State Trails Act that will facilitate the cooperation and willingness of special districts like Elephant Butte Irrigation District and Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District to participate in the designation of the Rio Grande Trail. for special district public use of the trail hosted on its land.

When a special district grants an easement or a right of way to EMNRD to be designated as part of the state trail system, they are also allowed to receive those limits of liability (excluding cases of willful or wanton misconduct of that special district). If there is gross negligence, there is still a pathway for the injured individual to pursue legal action. But per the state trails act, there is a liability entity, that being the Secreta of ENMRD, who would oversee, per the states trails act, the management, maintenance and policing of the trail system. EMNRD is just trying to clarify that immunity exists, and still giving claimants a voice and a path forward in the courts to right wrongs.

- **Task #1 – Activities #1 Description:** Develop language for the amendment as follows:

“The state trails act already says no person or corporation (INSERT: “or political subdivision or special district of the state, including irrigation and Conservancy District”) their successors and interest who has granted a right of way or easement across his land to the mineral energy minerals and Natural Resources Department for use in the state trail system, shall be liable to any user of the trail for injuries suffered on the right of way or easement unless the injuries are caused by the will for wanton misconduct of the grantor.”

2. Challenges & Risk Work Template - EXAMPLE

DEFINITION OF TASK AND ACTIVITY CHALLENGES AND/OR RISKS:

Task #1: Provide limited liability for Special Districts by amending the State Trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978)

- **Risk, Mitigation Activity 1-1:** Choosing the right legislation to amend. Review amendment strategy with EMNRD general counsel, MRGCD counsel, and personal injury lawyers' representative
- **Risk, Mitigation Activity 1-2:** Getting special districts, injury lawyers, and legislators on-board with the amendment. Host several meetings to review liabilities and other worries that the districts might have. Emphasize the benefit that this amendment provides to special districts in the event of litigation. Start with meetings with MRGCD and Elephant irrigation Districts.
- **Risk, Mitigation Activity 1-3:** Getting approval from the legislative body during the 2026 legislative session. Present to interim committees during the summer to address any concerns that could hinder the amendment from passing.

3. Schedule of Performance – Tabular Work Template - EXAMPLE

SCHEDULING GROUND RULES: (1) Identify approximate start and finish dates. For each Task and Activity; (2) Identify any milestone dates (key dates) that must be complied with.

Task /Act. #	Task Name	Activity Name/Description	Milestone ? Yes/No	Start Date	Finish Date	Comment No. Below
1-1	Amend Stare trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978)	Develop Amendment language				
1-2		Evaluate other avenues or if legislation is not required				
1-3		Promote the Amendment				
2-1	Possible transfer of trail segments to current land owners	Evaluate/develop language for MOU if appropriate				
3-1	Create Office Program Management Plan	Develop DRAFT PgMP Subcommittee template	No	6/15	7/30	
3-2		Subcommittee completes PgMP template	No	8/1	8/22	
3-3		Legislative Subcommittee creates DRAFT PgMP and transmits to all Subcommittee review and comment	No	8/23	9/6	#1
3-4		PgMP discussion in September Commission Meeting	YES	9/12	9/12	
3-5		Legislative Subcommittee prepares Final Draft for Secretary Approval	No	9/13	9/21	
3-6		Legislative Subcommittee finalizes PgMP for Execution	No	9/22	10/13	

- **Comment #1:** Legislative committee routes DRAFT PgMP to Commissioners one week before September Meeting for review.

4. Accomplishment & Deliverables Template

Task #1: Provide limited liability for Special Districts by amending the State Trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978).

- **Task #1 – Activities #1 Deliverable Description:** Selection of the right legislation to amend.
- **Task #1 – Activities #2 Deliverable Description:** Successfully soliciting approval from special districts, injury lawyers, and legislators on-board with the amendment.
- **Task #1 – Activities #3 Deliverable Description:** Successfully promote the legislative body during the 2026 legislative session to approve the proposed Act language changes.

5. Subcommittee Cost Estimating Template - EXAMPLE

COST ESTIMATING GROUND RULES: (1) * Include cost to mitigate risk as appropriate; (2) Other Direct Costs may include Trail Management Workshops, signage on designated trail segments, trail maintenance & development (fencing, gates, etc.):



Task/ Act. #	Task Name	Activity Name/ Description	Equipment/ Materials (\$)	Travel & Living (\$)	Other Direct Costs* (\$)	Subcontractor Service Costs (\$)	Total Activity Cost
1-1	Amend State Trails Act (Section 16-3-9 NMSA 1978)	Develop Amendment language					
1-2		Evaluate other avenues or if legislation is not required					
1-3		Promote the Amendment					
Comments Task #1:							
2-1	Possible transfer of trail segments to current land owners	TBD					
2.2		TBD					
2-3		TBD					
Comments Task #2:							
3-1	Prepare Office FY-26 Program Management Plan	Develop DRAFT PgMP Subcommittee template					
3-2		Subcommittee completes PgMP template					
3-3		Legislative Subcommittee created DRAFT PgMP for Subcommittee review and comment					
3-4		PgMP discussion in September Commission Meeting					
3-5		Legislative Subcommittee prepares Final Draft for Secretary Approval					
3-6		Legislative Subcommittee finalizes PgMP for Execution		\$2,500			
Comments Activity #3-6: Printing of final PgMP for EMNRD and general distribution - 50 copies @ \$50 each							
SUBTOTAL ESTIMATED COST (\$):			\$2,500				
						FY-26 ESTIMATED TOTAL COST (\$):	\$2,500



THANKS

For finding the time to plan your FY 26 efforts!

ATTACHMENT P: REPORT BACK: RGTC NON-PROFIT SUBCOMMITTEE



Report Back: Rio Grande Trail (RGT) Non-Profit Organization Subcommittee

Submitted to the RGT Commission for its 9/19/2025 meeting

Subcommittee participants: Commissioner Gross (Chair); Commissioners Harris, Bajema, Carter, and Temchin; Carl Colonius (ORD), Dan Majewski (Pland)

Purpose

The Subcommittee is developing a pathway to establish the **Rio Grande Trail Association (RGTA)**, the working name for the non-profit that would support the long-term sustainability of the RGT.

Key Activities - The Subcommittee met on 6/24, 7/8, 8/5, 8/19, and 9/2.

- **Scope of Work:** The Subcommittee drafted and refined a scope of work for EMNRD to convert into a request for proposals (RFP). Contractor tasks will include activities leading to the support of the formation of the RGTA, including statewide outreach (trail communities, trail users, tribal partners, outdoor equity leaders, agencies, etc.), mission, program area, governance recommendations, draft bylaws/policies, and a 3–year development plan. In addition, the Contractor will work with the Subcommittee to recruit and seat a Board of Directors to be responsible for RGTA formation and leadership. Regular updates to the Commission and Subcommittee will be required.
- **Funding:**
 - \$225,000 available from the RGT Office that must be fully spent by **June 2026**.
 - Proposed amount for this contract: Not to exceed \$100,000.
 - RGTC could consider allocating funding from the RGT Office in the future as seed money for starting up the RGTA.
- **Governance Prep:**
 - Pland has drafted bylaws, a conflict-of-interest policy, and an online board application form.
 - The Subcommittee decided to hold off on state/IRS filings until a Board is seated, though draft applications have been prepared that the Board can use, if they choose to.

- **Outreach & Diversity:** The Subcommittee recognized the need to broaden input into the RGTA's vision and formation beyond the current Subcommittee. Contractor scope emphasizes inclusive engagement. Ideas will be developed for advertising the RFP through Commission members, NM NPO networks, and community foundations.
- **Collaboration:** EMNRD will manage the RFP process. Once established, the NPO will operate independently while collaborating with the Commission and could pursue legislative seed funding in collaboration with the RGTC or otherwise.

Next Step: Finalize Scope of Work & Present to Commission for approval

Summary

The Subcommittee has moved from concept to action: drafting organizational documents, refining the Scope of Work, and preparing an RFP process to launch the Rio Grande Trail Association. Approval at the September 19 Commission meeting is the next step to ensure timely use of funds and progress toward a sustainable non-profit partner for the Trail.

Motion for Consideration by the RGTC at its 9/19 Meeting

“The Commission hereby authorizes its Non-Profit Organization Subcommittee to proceed forward in working through EMNRD to advertise and select a contractor to complete the scope of work presented to the Commission concerning the formation of a non-profit organization to support the establishment, stewardship, and promotion of the Rio Grande Trail. The Commission authorizes up to \$100,000 of the funds maintained by the Rio Grande Trail Office to be used for this contract.”

ATTACHMENT Q: RGT NPO FORMATION SCOPE OF WORK



Introductory Note: *This document is written as a scope of work for a contractor to fulfill. The Rio Grande Trail Commission (RGTC) Non-Profit Organization (NPO) Subcommittee assumes that EMNRD will take this scope of work and run it through its standard Request for Proposal template and process to advertise the scope of work, select the best contractor (in collaboration with the Subcommittee), finalize the contract for the work to move forward, and pay for it through funds currently retained by the Office of the Rio Grande Trail.*

**Scope of Work to
Establish a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization to
Support the Development of the Rio Grande Trail**

Draft - Last Update: 09-05-2025

The Rio Grande Trail Commission (“RGTC”) seeks proposals from contractors to fulfill the following scope of work to establish a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to support development of the Rio Grande Trail (RGT), consistent with the work being conducted by the RGTC.

Scope of Work

The selected Contractor will complete the following within five (5) months of entering into a contractual agreement with the ENMRD on behalf of the RGTC and the Office of the Rio Grande Trail.

1. Produce a report (“Report”) for starting up a Non-Profit Organization (“NPO”) to support development of the Rio Grande Trail that addresses the following and is based on stakeholder outreach and research conducted by the Contractor. The Report shall include:
 - a. NPO purpose, based on the [initial draft](#) provided by RGTC.
 - b. Organizational goals and objectives.
 - c. Organizational structure, including key functions, program areas, and staffing.
 - d. Structure and desired composition of the board and potential committees.
 - e. List of potential board members, compiled through public engagement (including #2 below) and advertisement of a Google form seeking self-nominations.
 - f. Relationships between and roles of the NPO, RGTC (including the RGT NPO Subcommittee), NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, and NM Outdoor Recreation Division. This should be formatted as a Memorandum of Understanding.

- g. How the NPO would operate in a manner that is consistent with the NM State Trails Act and the statutes pertaining to the Rio Grande Trail Commission.
 - h. Organizational 3-year conceptual development and growth plan with explanatory narrative and annual budgets, including expense and revenue categories.
 - i. Ranked list of potential funding sources, including seed money from the Office of the Rio Grande Trail, government programs, foundations, and other non-government sources.
 - j. Description of the process for selecting and seating board members for the NPO.
 - k. Recommended initial steps for the NPO board to take (including adopting bylaws, state and federal filings).
 - l. Include an appendix or appendices describing the public engagement conducted (see #2 below), input received, overall responses, and a summary of what was learned.
2. As part of gathering information for the report, conduct a thorough public engagement process that includes gathering input from the following stakeholders and entities, providing opportunities for written and verbal input:
 - a. Trails and public lands stewardship non-profit organizations
 - b. Public meetings in communities located along the trail
 - c. Outdoor recreation organizations representing trail users (hiking, biking, equestrian)
 - d. Conservation and wildlife organizations
 - e. General statewide outreach (virtual meeting)
 - f. Outdoor equity leaders
 - g. Pueblo and Tribal Nations
 - h. RGT Commissioners
 - i. Relevant government agencies at the local, state, and federal levels.
 - j. Other key stakeholders/partners/potential partners
3. Stand up the NPO
 - a. After the final report is complete, lead the RGTC NPO Subcommittee in the process of further recruitment of prospective board members; evaluating, selecting, and extending invitations to board candidates; and tracking responses from them.
 - b. Bring board members together for an NPO formation meeting or meetings, after which the board members would exercise ownership of the

organization and pursue further steps such as submitting applicable state and federal forms, securing Directors & Omissions insurance, etc.

4. Complete the following process tasks in service of completing this Scope of Work:
 - a. Attend all meetings of the RGTC to provide progress updates.
 - b. Meet at least monthly with the RGTC NPO Subcommittee to gather information, report on progress and upcoming tasks, and seek input and direction from the Subcommittee as needed.
 - c. Consult the [Rio Grande Trail Master Plan](#), [RGTC founding legislation](#), [Rio Grande Trail website](#), and RGTC meeting packets and notes from 2025. Ensure that the Report produced is consistent with these documents.
 - d. Provide the RGTC NPO Subcommittee with one draft of the report to review and incorporate consensus input provided by the Subcommittee into a final report.

5. Proposals shall include the following:
 - a. Overall approach for conducting the work.
 - b. Detailed timeline including items in the scope of work.
 - c. Statement of qualifications to complete this work.
 - d. Resumes or CVs of team members.
 - e. Detailed budget including line items for staff involved, hourly rate, and number of hours, as well as direct expenses including travel.

ATTACHMENT R: RGT SIGNAGE PACKAGE





SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

2025

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OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

Signage and wayfinding for outdoor recreation projects provide users with navigational guidance, enhance their experience, and increase access. They also offer essential information, including rules and regulations, guidance on etiquette, and create an identity with branding and visual continuity. A combination of signage, markings, maps, and technological aids can be added to support and improve the user experience.

along or connected to the Rio Grande Trail. The Rio Grande Trail requires appropriate signage that supports the user through their recreation experiences, enhances access, educates, and creates a strong brand and identity.

This document guides you through best practices to select appropriate sign types, follow graphic standards, and comply with sign standards and requirements that should be considered when developing projects for the Rio Grande Trail.

The Rio Grande Trail (RGT) Signage Guidelines (Guide) are intended to guide signage for projects

INTRODUCTION & APPLICABILITY

This Guide was created in 2025 to guide appropriate signage implementation for projects developed on the Rio Grande Trail. It includes guidance on sign types and selecting the appropriate sign for a specific purpose, graphic standards, and compliance with required federal sign standards. In areas where other sign standards exist those will govern. Links to applicable sign regulations are provided in "[Sign Standards Compliance](#)" on page 19.

This Guide applies to a wide range of projects and situations and should be considered before a project is developed. The information presented is intended for design purposes. Any details provided should not be interpreted as construction-ready, and concepts should be further reviewed and approved by qualified professionals before any building activities commence.

SIGNAGE CONSIDERATIONS

Signage is a crucial element for every quality outdoor recreation project, offering numerous benefits that enhance the overall experience for visitors. Comprehensive, high-quality signage is essential for effective navigation and orientation, helping individuals understand their geographic location and easily navigate complex environments. Signage guides visitors along the most efficient routes by providing visual cues and clear information, significantly improving their overall user experience by reducing stress and frustration.

Additionally, signage is critical in ensuring safety, particularly in emergencies where quick and accurate navigation is essential. It also enhances accessibility, enabling people with disabilities, including those with visual or mobility impairments, to navigate spaces independently and safely. Incorporating tactile and auditory elements in signage ensures inclusivity for all visitors.

Furthermore, wayfinding contributes to the brand image and aesthetics of an area, reinforcing a

positive perception of the associated agency or institution. Consistent and visually appealing signage enhances the overall design and helps maintain a professional and welcoming environment. Compliance with regulations and promoting etiquette are also key benefits, as signage can display rules, regulations, and messages that encourage responsible behavior. By adopting

nationally accepted messages like Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly, agencies can effectively communicate ethics and promote respectful behavior, thereby playing a significant role in minimizing the impact on natural, cultural, and social resources.

SIGNAGE FAMILY

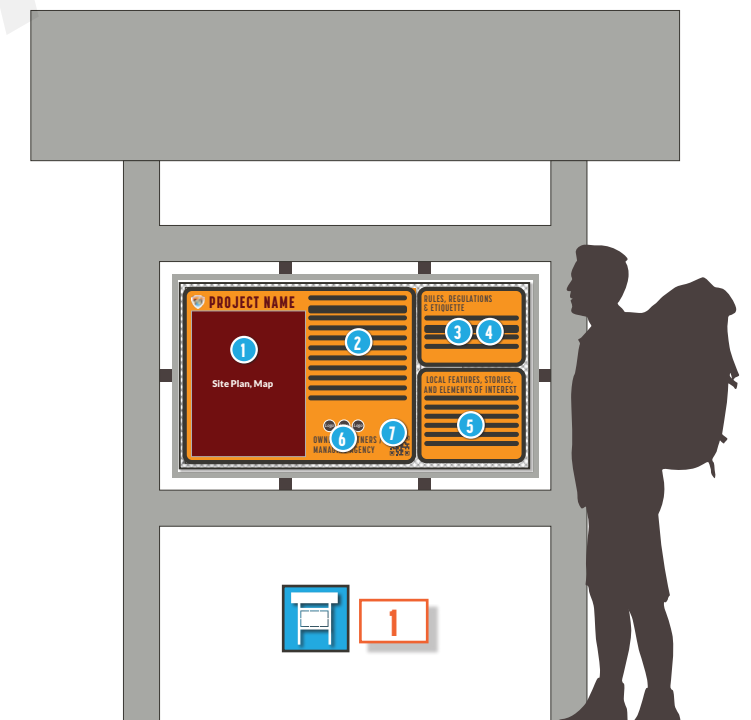
The sign family is a collection of signs that guide recreators and visitors on the Rio Grande Trail and establish a cohesive identity. Signs in a particular system should share common design elements, such as color schemes, typography, symbols, and layout styles. Some parts are consistent, and others will change depending on the location and jurisdiction. Each sign type fulfills a different purpose; together,

they enhance the user experience, increase access, offer important information, provide guidance on etiquette, and create an identity and visual continuity.

The following pages introduce members of the sign family and highlight the sign elements that should be included.

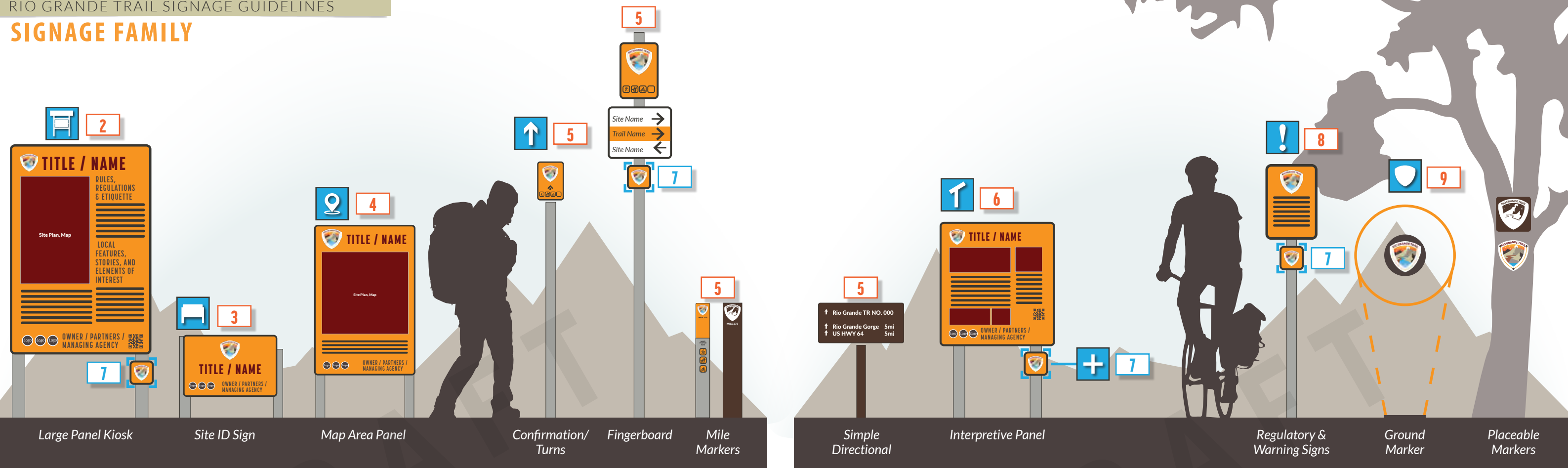
PRIMARY SIGNS

1 Sign Kiosk: The kiosk provides visitors with an overview of the open space, park, or trail system, its layout, points of interest, and rules and regulations. It also provides an opportunity to educate visitors about unique local features, stories, local history, and culture. The kiosk can be part of a structure or a standalone sign. It typically includes (1) an overview map, (2) general information related to the specific open space, park or trail, (3) rules and regulations, (4) etiquette, (5) educational topic(s), (6) owners, partners, managing agencies, and (7) a potential link to additional information.



Kiosk

SIGNAGE FAMILY



2 Large Panel: A large-panel kiosk is an acceptable alternative when there are constraints. This large metal sign face can accommodate all the information displayed on the kiosk without the external structure.

interest, and (4) owners, partners, and managing agencies. Maps should be added at major access points and trailheads.

SECONDARY SIGNS

3 Site ID Signs: Site ID signs provide identification of parks and trails. They typically display less information than the kiosk, and include (1) the name of the trail or recreation area. Larger outdoor recreation areas with multiple access points may require multiple site ID signs. Trails will require identification signs at major trail access areas.

4 Map Area Signs: For orientation purposes, open space areas, parks, and trails should include a map(s) to help orient visitors and identify major destinations and points of interest. Map area signs typically include (1) the trail or recreation area name, the RGT logo, (2) a map of the area that highlights specific destinations and points of

DIRECTIONAL & INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

5 Directional Signs: For orientation purposes, open space areas, parks, and trails should include directional signs at entrances, exits, and decision-making points and periodically to confirm a route. There is a variety of directional signage options, each with a unique use case. The largest sign in the family, the fingerboard, typically includes (1) permitted user groups, (2) guidance to specific destinations, and (3) the RGT logo. Smaller signs, like the confirmation sign, simple directional sign, or mile markers, may only include some of this information.

6 Interpretive Signs: Interpretive signs are informational displays designed to provide context, explanation, and understanding to visitors at a particular location. These signs aim to interpret

the significance of the surrounding environment, historical sites, or natural features, amongst others. They typically include (1) the trail or recreation area name, (2) information related to a specific natural, cultural, or site topic, history, and culture, (3) owners, partners, and managing agencies, and (4) a potential link to additional information.

PARTNER SIGNAGE

7 Partner Signage: Partner Signage is to be installed on existing signage structures along the trail. It can include markers, blazes, and directional signs. The primary purpose of partner signage is to inform and direct users that they are recreating on the RGT. Sizes and applications will vary depending on the existing sign structures.

REGULATORY & WARNING SIGNS

8 Regulatory & Warning Signs: Regulatory and Warning signs are vital in guiding and informing users, ensuring safety, conservation, and the proper

use of the specific outdoor recreation facility. These signs convey rules and regulations related to a place that must be followed to maintain order and protect the environment. Regulatory signs can be part of another sign or stand-alone. Many jurisdictions that the trail traverses have specific rules and regulations related to trail and open space use. To determine the correct requirements, contact the underlying land manager and owner and incorporate required and recommended rules and regulations on your signs.


MARKERS & BLAZES


9 Markers & Blazes: Markers and Blazes are small Rio Grande Trail logos that are versatile in their trailside placement. Where the trail surface is solid rock or paved, they may be embedded into the ground, and where the trail passes through forested areas they can be affixed to trees. These markers tell users that they are still following the correct path while reinforcing the identity of the trail.


SIGN PLACEMENT


SIGN PLACEMENT


Different projects will require different signs. The following outlines guidance on the types of signs that should be included and where they should be placed.


 Each project will require a **Site Identification** sign. Site ID signs should be placed at a location visible to the approaching visitor when they first arrive.








 For projects that encompass a system of trails, amenities, activities, and destinations, the inclusion of a **Sign Kiosk** or **Large Sign Panel** is highly recommended. These signs, when placed near the site's entrance and at decision-making points, intersections, and areas of visitor congregation, provide comprehensive project information and educational opportunities. They enhance the visitor's experience and understanding of the site, its history, natural environment, and cultural elements.

 For trails, large parks, and projects located within a larger area, **directional** and **confirmation signs** are recommended. Directional signs should be used at decision-making points and where they help direct visitors to their destination. Confirmation signs should be used in between directional signs to confirm that users are still on the right path.

 **Interpretive signs** play a vital role in any outdoor project. They are a powerful tool for educating visitors about the site's unique features, stories, history, and culture. When strategically located at significant points or related to natural/historic features, they foster a deeper connection between the visitor and the site. These signs can be paired with a sign kiosk or stand-alone, depending on the project's needs.

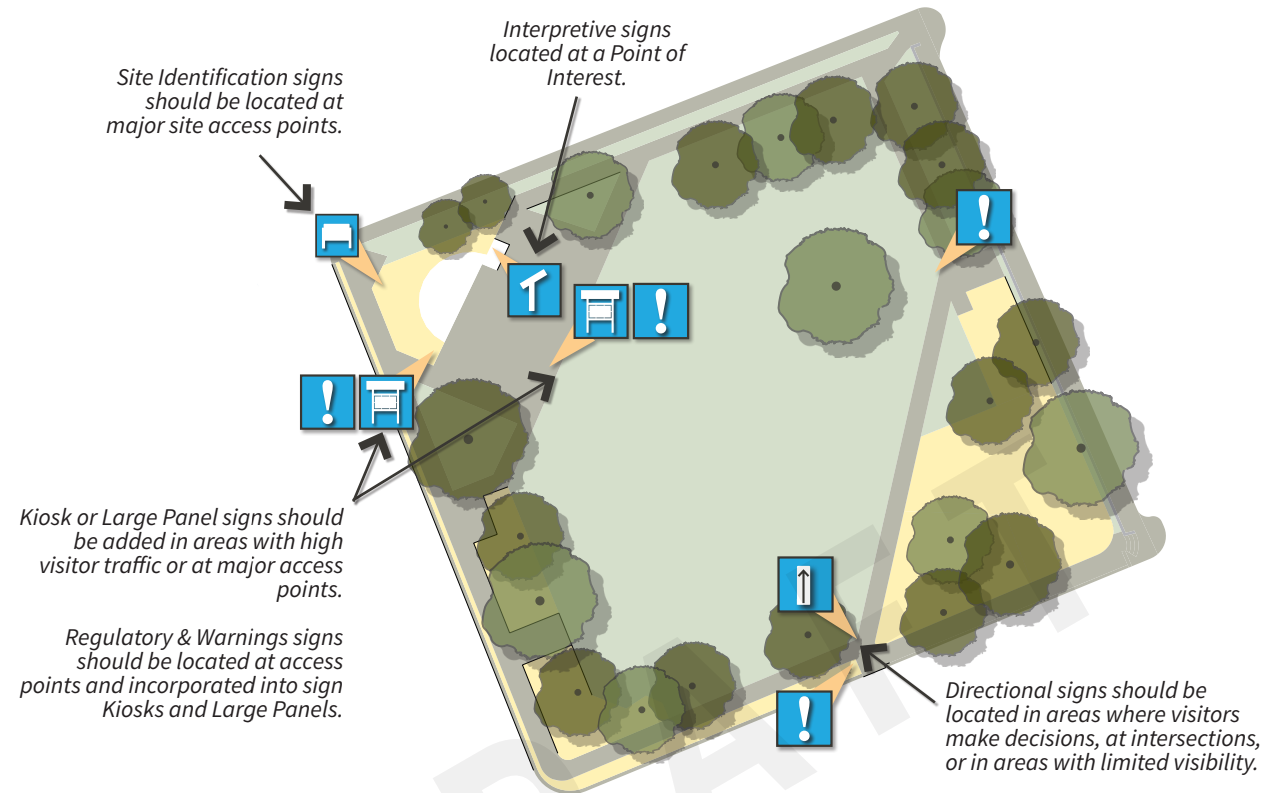
 **Regulatory & Warning signs** should be placed in visible locations at access points and in areas where visitors make decisions. Specific regulation signs should be associated with the specific site and instance they are referencing. Specific regulation signs may include prohibitory signs, dog regulation signs, and boundary signs, amongst others.

 **Markers & Blazes** can be fixed to trees along the trail, or to posts. When applied to trees, markers should be placed approximately 5-7' above the ground on both sides of the tree. Markers should be installed with an inch of nail protruding to allow for tree growth. On posts, attach a marker 3" from the top on each trail-facing side. Use wooden Markers rather than plastic or aluminium when possible. In wilderness areas, non-wood markers are unacceptable.

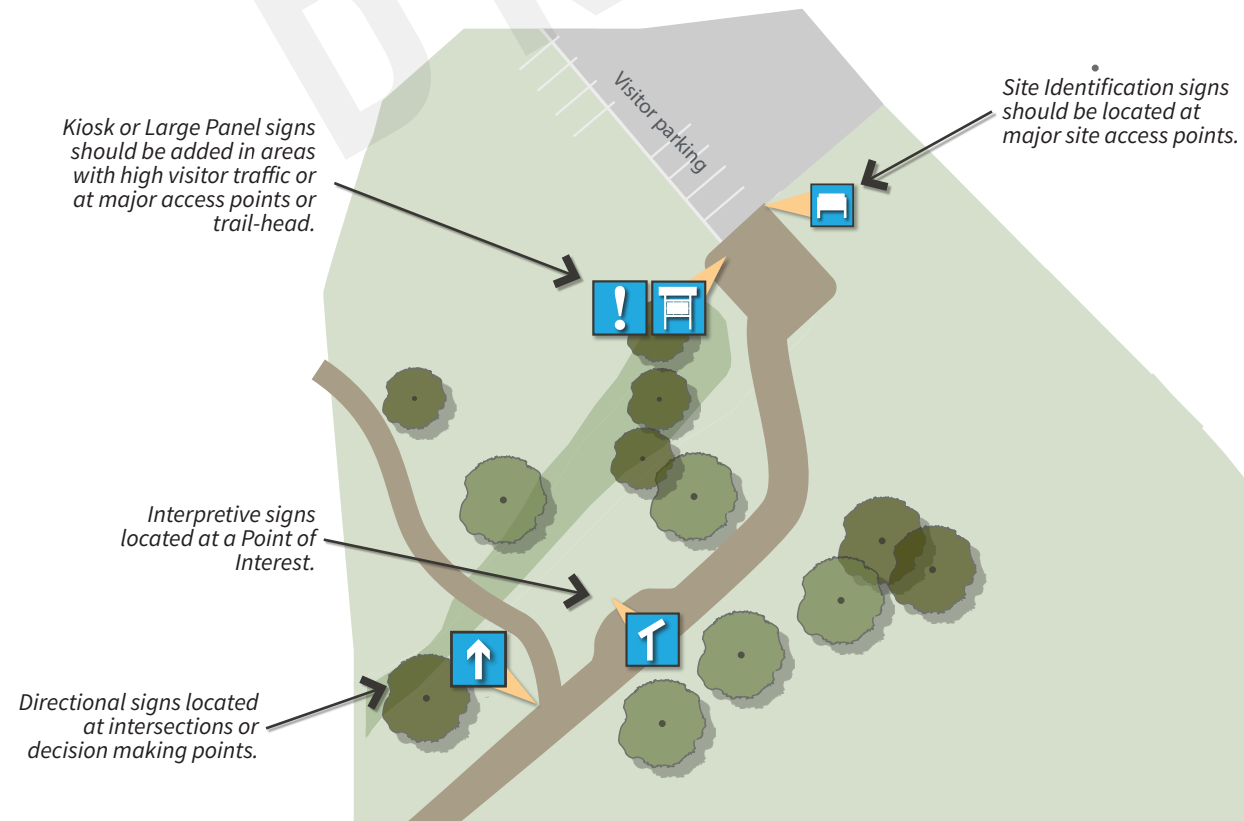
	 Kiosk/Large Panel	 Site Identification	 Map Area Sign	 Directional/Confirmation Directional	 Interpretive	 Regulatory & Warning Signs	 Markers & Blazes
Main Access Points	☑	☑				☑	
Trailhead/High Traffic Area	☑		☑	☑	☑	☑	
Point of Interest			☑	☑	☑	☑	
Along a Trail				☑		☑	☑
Roadways				☑			
Adjacent Trails				☑			
Junction/Intersection/Major Decision Making Point			☑	☑		☑	

SIGN PLACEMENT

SIGN PLACEMENT - PARKS & OPEN SPACE AREAS



SIGN PLACEMENT - TRAILS



GRAPHIC STANDARDS

The three fundamental components for designing a Rio Grande Trail sign's style are its color palette, typography, and logos. If your project or organization already has established style guidelines for other materials, it is advisable to maintain consistency by applying the same style to your signage.

In the absence of existing style guidelines, developing signage presents an excellent opportunity to establish a distinctive visual identity for your project. Evaluate the key characteristics of your project and select colors and fonts that represent these attributes effectively.

LOGO

Rio Grande Trail Logo

The RGT logo used throughout the wayfinding system

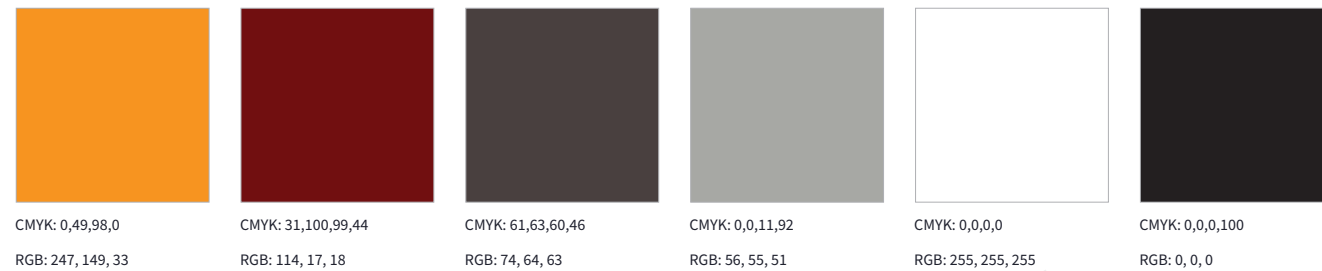


GRAPHIC STANDARDS

COLOR PALETTE

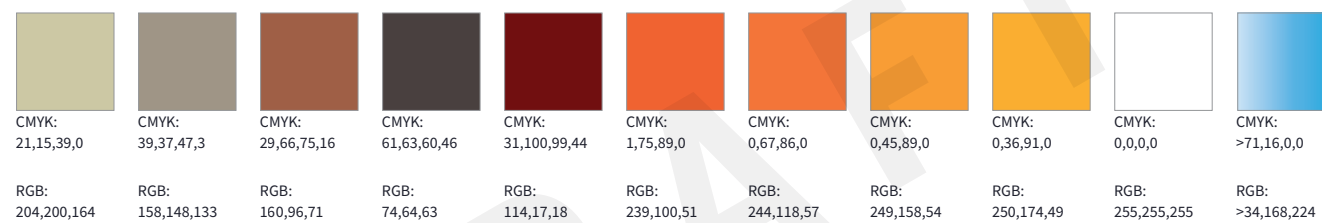
Wayfinding System Colors

The primary colors used throughout the wayfinding system

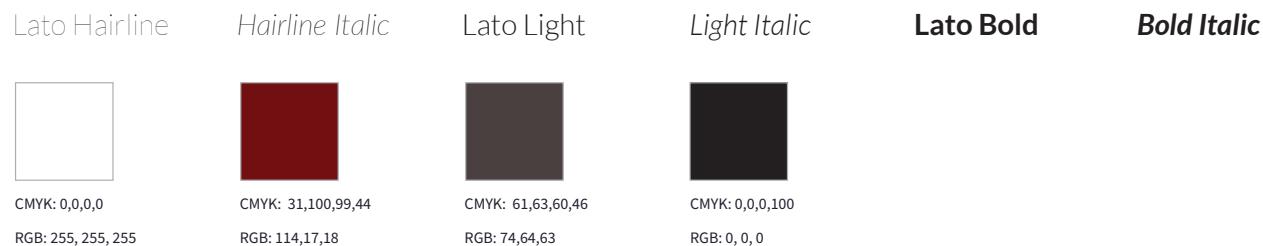


Logo Colors

The set of colors used in the official Rio Grande Trail Logo and related branding graphics



TYPEFACE



Lato Black is the sole font to be used everywhere in the RGT sign system. It is a modern sans serif set of characters that is highly legible. The Lato typeface includes a variety of styles and weights. Text on signage should be displayed in the colors shown above, these colors all contrast well with their backgrounds, enhancing accessibility and legibility while continuing to convey the developed signage brand. When lettering is applied to darker colored signs, text should be printed in white.

LEGIBILITY

The general rule is that 1 inch of letter height provides 10 feet of readability for optimal legibility for signage. This means that letters 3 inches tall are best read from 30 feet away, ensuring that your signage makes a strong impact. A sign visibility chart is recommended to achieve the best results, as it eliminates the need to memorize specifics and provides clear guidance.

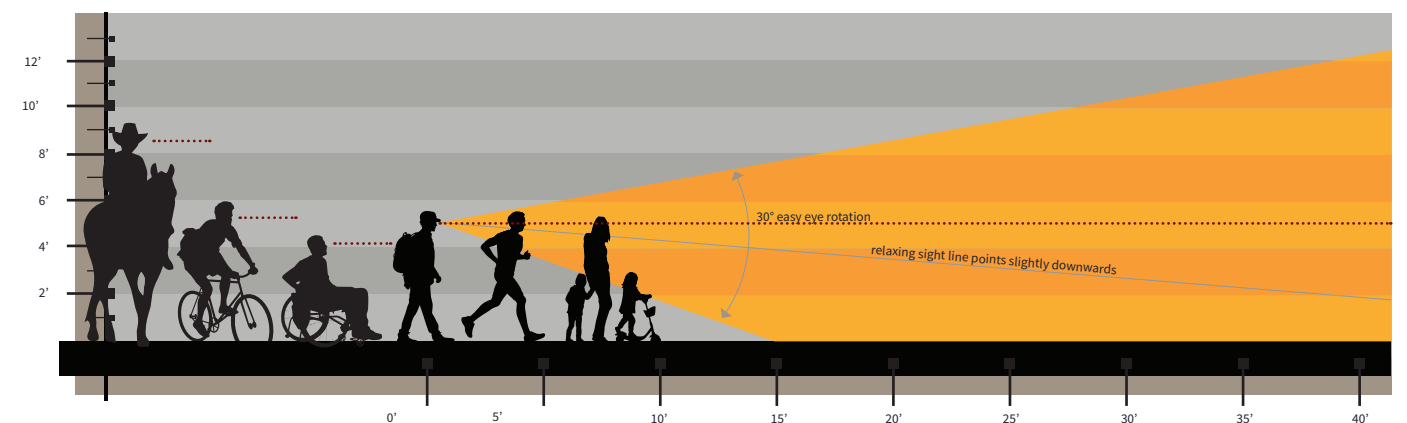
Several factors influence sign visibility, including font style, color, white space, and placement. Bold fonts are easier to read from a distance than thinner, decorative styles. High-contrast color schemes improve readability, such as light text on a dark background. Adequate white space around the text helps it stand out, with a recommended 40/60 ratio between copy area and whitespace. The table below showcases ideal text height at various distances. To ensure legibility, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), these guidelines should be followed.

Distance From (Feet)	2.5	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65
Cap Letter Height (Inch)	.25	.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5

VISIBILITY

The field of view encompasses the visible area a visitor can see when scanning their surroundings, while the line of sight refers to what is directly in a visitor's view as they navigate a site. Signs should be strategically placed within the field of view, directly ahead of visitors on their path of travel, ensuring easy detection and readability.

Improperly positioned signs—too high, too low, or obstructed—can be overlooked by visitors casually surveying their environment. To ensure visibility, signs must be placed within the user's field of view and be accessible to various types of visitors, including hikers, cyclists, equestrians, drivers, and individuals with impairments.



GRAPHIC STANDARDS

GRAMMAR AND TRANSLATION

Multilingual translation

English will be the primary language applied on signage, where text is used. While it is important to provide bilingual messages (English and Spanish) wherever possible in areas heavily used by non-English speaking populations, facility names and other formal place names, especially on ‘Site Identification’ signs and markers, should not be translated as it presents a safety problem with emergency response services. For all message translations, signs should follow and comply with any signage requirements and guidelines for the sign’s respective jurisdiction.

Where translations are present, always have the English messages translated by a professional translator and have the translated text back translated to ensure consistency in the intended signage content meaning. For additional guidance on Spanish Style Guide, visit [The National Parks Service Spanish Style Guide](#)

Indigenous placenames are encouraged on ‘Interpretive Signs’ only if deemed appropriate or approved by local Tribal community leaders. This content celebrates and acknowledges local history and cultural information along the Rio Grande Trail. Tribal community engagement and research are highly encouraged to better understand indigenous language protocols and to avoid disclosing culturally sensitive information. The New Mexico Secretary of the State’s Office and Native American Election Information Program details the various languages for each of the 23 NM Federally Recognized Tribes ([Found Here](#)). Refer to the “Land Acknowledgement Guide” and “Tribal Engagement Process” section of these guidelines for more details on engaging with local Tribal communities.

Font styles for languages

Where multiple languages are present, sign messages should be visually distinguishable by utilizing different typeface styles for the primary English text and secondary language text. Lato Regular and Lato Bold shall be applied exclusively for English messages. Lato Italic and Bold Italic shall be used exclusively for Spanish messages and other languages. Lato Regular can be used in special applications for ADA tactile lettering and complex sign layouts.

SIGN TYPE LOCATIONS GUIDANCE

Trail signage placement guidance is crucial for several reasons, particularly for ensuring safety, navigation, and an enhanced outdoor experience for trail users. Here are some key points highlighting the importance of proper trail signage placement:

ROW Owner	Applicable Signage Standards
National Parks Service (NPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Parks Service UniGuide Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
United States Forest Service (USFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US Forest Service Sign Installation Guide Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BLM National Sign Handbook Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
Department of Transportation (NMDOT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design
County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Depends on ROW Jurisdiction</i>
Other (Private)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Depends on ROW Jurisdiction</i>

GRAPHIC STANDARDS

SYMBOLOLOGY

Universally recognizable symbols (icons or pictograms) are an essential wayfinding element. Icons and pictograms are essential for signage in outdoor recreation projects because they communicate information quickly and effectively. They transcend language barriers, making them easily understood by a diverse audience, including non-native speakers and international visitors. Visual symbols can be processed faster than text, allowing users to grasp important information at a glance, which is particularly useful in dynamic outdoor environments where quick decision-making is crucial.







Distilling complex information into simple, easily recognizable images, icons, and pictograms reduces cognitive load and enhances comprehension for users of all ages and literacy levels. Standardized icons create a uniform visual language, ensuring consistent messaging across signs and locations. Additionally, well-designed icons contribute to the overall aesthetic of the signage, enhance visual appeal, and integrate seamlessly with the natural environment. They also occupy less space than text, allowing for more concise use of the signage area. Most importantly, clear and immediate communication of warnings and guidelines through icons and pictograms improves safety by ensuring critical information is easily noticeable and understood. [The National Parks' Map Symbols](#) are free and in the public domain, with hundreds of symbols.



EXCERPT FROM THE NATIONAL PARKS SYMBOLS



SIGN FACE COMPONENTS

The sign face pertains to the printed sign panel. Typically, this includes the name and logo of the open space, park, or trail. Directional signs may incorporate directional guidance, distances, and destination information. The sign kiosk, being the most intricate component, is examined in greater detail in this section. Below is an overview of signage elements and the essential components that should be included.

	 Kiosk/Large Panel	 Site Identification	 Map Area Sign	 Directional	 Interpretive	 Regulatory & Warning
Project Logo/Name	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Land Acknowledgment	✓				✓	
Project Map	✓		✓			
Project Overview/Description	✓					
Directional Information	✓		✓	✓		
Owners, partners, and managing agencies	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Rules & Regulations	✓		✓		✓	✓
Trail Etiquette	✓		✓	✓		

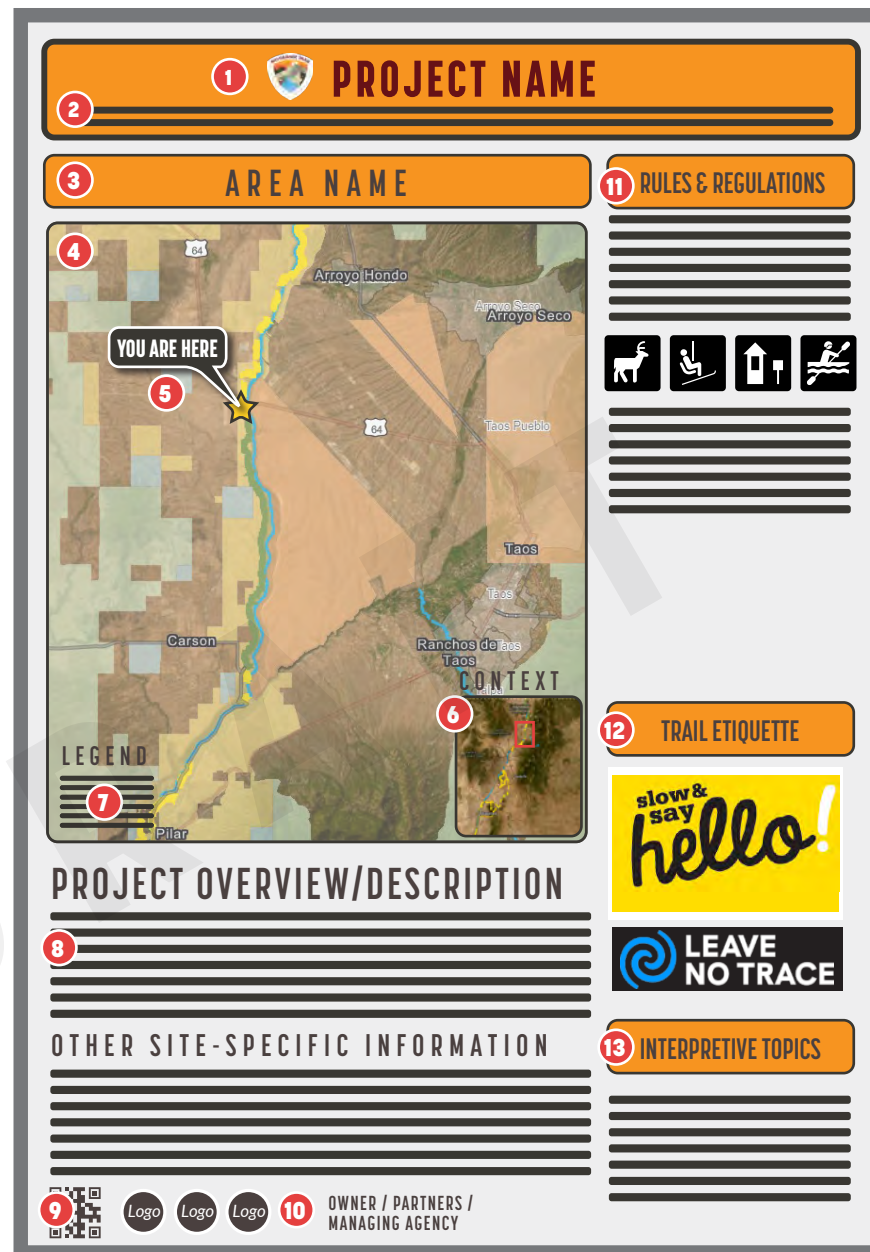
 = Element Always to include
 = Element to include on a case by case basis

GRAPHIC STANDARDS

The sign kiosk is an example that includes several different sign components. The components may differ depending on the sign's location, the project scope, and the land manager/landowner. The list below highlights a version that includes a sample set of sign components.

The number and type of components are a good starting point to provide navigational, educational, and etiquette guidance on a project for a sign kiosk.

- 1 Project Name + Logo
- 2 Land Acknowledgment
- 3 Area Name
- 4 Map
- 5 "You Are Here" Icon
- 6 Context Map with the Project Area Highlighted
- 7 Legend of map element
- 8 General Project Overview/Description and other Site-Specific Information
- 9 QR Code to Link to Project Website
- 10 Owners, partners, and managing agencies
- 11 Rules & Regulations
- 12 Trail Etiquette, may include:
 - *Slow & Say Hello* (<https://safetrailsmarin.org/>)
 - *Leave No Trace Trail* (<https://int.org/why/7-principles/>)
 - *Cultural Artifacts Belong*
- 13 Interpretive topic(s)



SIGN STANDARDS COMPLIANCE

AGENCY STANDARDS

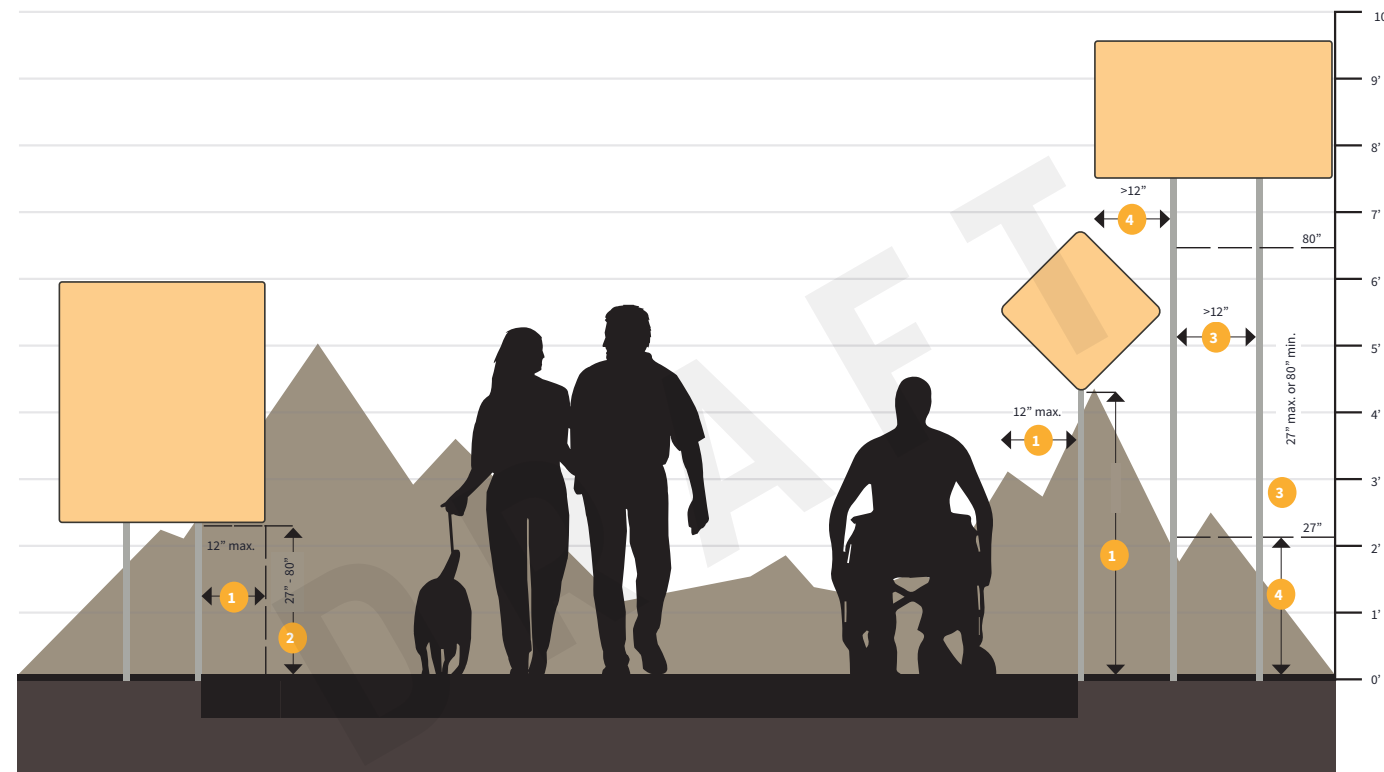
Many agencies and land managers have their own signage guidelines. If your project is on land owned or managed by an agency, your project's signage must follow their guidelines. All signs must also conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) linked below, regardless of location. The following table outlines agency requirements and links to the standards, where available. The following pages also detail a few sign requirements. All projects should follow the applicable guidelines and the guidelines outlined in this document. In the following pages we also outline a few selected federal requirements to provide additional guidance.

Agency	Description	Link
Department of Justice (DOJ) / United States Access Board	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design: These standards outline requirements for accessible signage in public accommodations and commercial facilities, including specifications for height, contrast, and tactile elements.	https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/design-standards/2010-stds/
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD): The MUTCD defines the standards for signs, signals, and pavement markings on all public roads and highways. It includes guidelines for sign design, placement, and maintenance to ensure consistent and clear communication for road users. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) Guide: This guide provides best practices for pedestrian and bicycle wayfinding signage, including design principles, placement strategies, and case studies to improve non-motorized transportation networks.	https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/11th_Edition/mutcd11thedition.pdf https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/2022-06/fhwasa09025.pdf
General Services Administration (GSA)	Federal Facilities Signage Guidelines: These guidelines provide standards for signage in federal buildings and facilities, focusing on accessibility, readability, and uniformity to enhance navigation and wayfinding.	
United States Access Board	Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Standards: The ABA Standards apply to facilities designed, built, altered, or leased with federal funds. They include requirements for signage that ensures accessibility for people with disabilities, such as tactile characters and Braille.	https://www.access-board.gov/files/aba/ABASTandards.pdf
National Park Service (NPS)	National Park Service (NPS) Sign Program: The NPS Sign Program provides guidelines for signage in national parks, focusing on enhancing visitor experience through consistent and clear wayfinding, interpretive signs, and regulatory signs.	https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online-books/npsg/sign_manual_1988.pdf https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1453/road-signs.htm https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1453/pedestrian-signs.htm
United States Forest Service (USFS)	Forest Service Sign and Poster Guidelines: These guidelines cover the design, placement, and maintenance of signs in national forests, emphasizing safety, information dissemination, and compliance with environmental and aesthetic standards.	https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3810021.pdf https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5335847.pdf
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Sign Handbook: The BLM Sign Handbook offers comprehensive guidance on the design and installation of signs on BLM-managed lands, focusing on wayfinding, regulatory, and interpretive signage.	https://www.blm.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/NationalSignHandbook16_0.pdf

SIGN STANDARDS COMPLIANCE

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STANDARDS

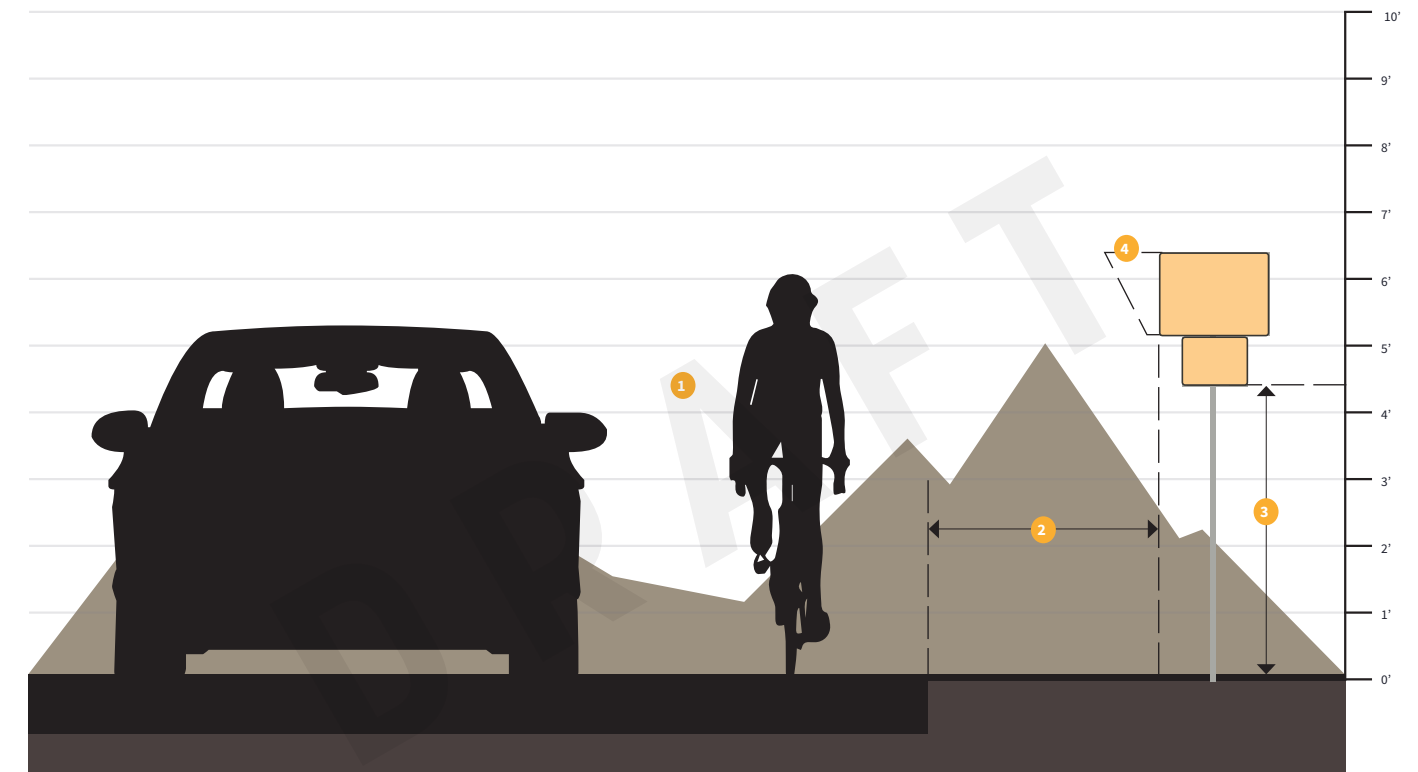
Complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements is required on all projects. It ensures that individuals with disabilities are accommodated in their outdoor recreation experiences and helps prevent discrimination. The following sign standards apply to all multi-use or pedestrian facilities.



- 1 Freestanding signs mounted on either one or two posts have a maximum overhang of 12 inches from the side of the post into any circulation pathways if the object's bottom edge is elevated between 27" to 80" above the floor level or ground.
- 2 Where a sign is mounted on two posts, and the clear distance between the posts is less than 12", the lowest edge of the sign must be between 27" and 80" above the ground.
- 3 Where a sign is mounted on two posts, and the clear distance between the posts is greater than 12", the lowest edge of such sign is 27 inches maximum or 80 inches minimum above the finish floor or ground.
- 4 The lowest edge of a protruding post-mounted sign must be elevated by a minimum of 80" unless guardrails with a maximum clearance of 27" are provided.

MUTCD STANDARDS

On and along all public roads, signs must comply with MUTCD standards, as the state adopted them. The following standards apply to all signs along facilities owned and managed by NMDOT.



- 1 Where signs serve bicyclists and other road users, vertical mounting height and lateral placement should follow the guidelines below.
- 2 For post-mounted signs, the minimum lateral offset should be 12 feet from the edge of the traveled way. If a shoulder wider than 6 feet exists, the minimum lateral offset for post-mounted signs should be 6' from the edge of the shoulder. On conventional roads where it is impractical to locate a sign with the lateral offset, a lateral offset of at least 2 feet may be used. A lateral offset of at least 1' from the face of the curb may be used in business, commercial, or residential areas where sidewalk width is limited or where existing poles are close to the curb.
- 3 In business or residence districts, where parking or pedestrian movements are common, it's crucial to maintain a clearance of at least 7 feet to the bottom of the sign. This ensures safety and smooth traffic flow.
- 4 Sign shapes depend on the type: Regulatory and warning signs are rectangular, while Recreational, cultural interest, Area, and National Forest Route series signs are trapezoidal.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT GUIDE

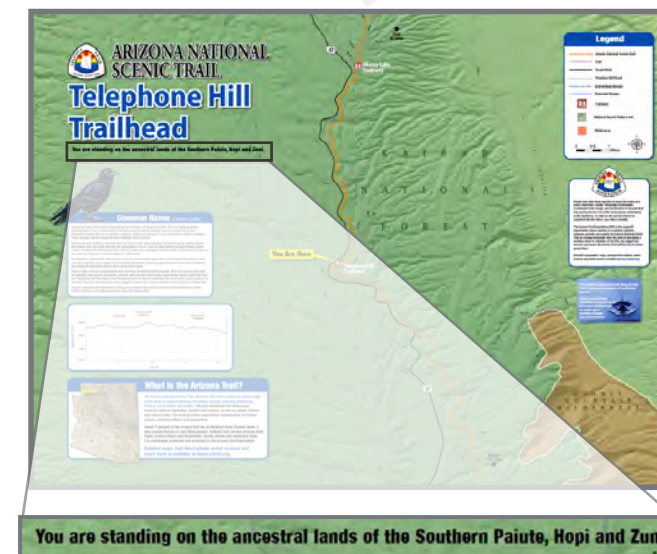
RESOURCES

Land Acknowledgments are statements used to acknowledge the ancestral territory and history of the lands we live, work, and recreate. They are also used to engage in a process of reconciliation and recognition of indigenous lands. Regardless of today's political borders and boundaries, all land is Indigenous land. The following table outlines resources and links to guidelines for creating appropriate land acknowledgments using a recommended four-step process: **1 Research**, **2 Identify**, **3 Outreach**, and **4 Draft**. All projects should follow the guidelines outlined in this document to incorporate an appropriate Land Acknowledgment into their signs. The table below outlines resources that can be utilized to create the Land Acknowledgment.

Step	Agency	Description	Link
1	National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)	Tribal Nations and the United States: An Introduction: The guide developed by NCAI seeks to provide a basic overview of tribal governance's history and underlying principles. It also provides introductory information about tribal governments and American Indian and Alaska Native people today.	https://archive.ncai.org/about-tribes
1	U.S. Department of Arts and Culture (USDAC)	Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgment: Learn more about this history and the contemporary context of Native groups in your region. Search for books, articles, people, and organizations that you can learn more about and access the #HonorNativeLand Resource Pack.	https://usdac.us/nativeland
1	United Nations (UN)	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: The United States was one of four nations to vote against the declaration when it was first adopted in 2007. It was the last of the four to reverse that in 2010.	https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf
2	Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)	Tribal Leadership Directory: This interactive map directory resource provides up-to-date tribal land areas and contact information for each federally recognized tribe.	https://biamaps.geoplatform.gov/Tribal-Leaders-Directory/
2	Native Land Digital	Native Land Digital Map: Native Land is a resource for learning more about Indigenous territories, languages, lands, and ways of life.	https://native-land.ca/
3	New Mexico Indian Affairs Department (NM IAD)	Nations, Pueblos & Tribes: This resource provides contact information for each of the twenty-three 23 tribes in New Mexico. This resource also includes contact information for Pueblo organizations, including the All Pueblo Council of Governors, Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, and Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council. If possible, engage with representatives of the specific Tribe or Nation and ask how they would like to be represented.	https://biamaps.geoplatform.gov/Tribal-Leaders-Directory/
3	Local Tribal Institutions and Cultural Organizations	Additional outreach should be initiated to local tribal institutions and cultural organizations for input on land acknowledgments.	

Step	Agency	Description	Link
4	Statements Examples	<p>Land acknowledgments can vary in length depending on the space available on a sign. There is no exact script we are recommending for drafting land acknowledgments, and acknowledgments change based on location. Below are several examples of short and long-version statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of the _____ People." <p>Often, statements specifically honor elders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "We acknowledge that this is the traditional lands of the _____ People, and we honor the elders both past and present." <p>Some allude to the caring, reciprocal relationship with land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "We respectfully acknowledge the _____ People, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations." <p>Acknowledgments may also make explicit mention of the occupied, unceded nature of the territory in which a gathering is taking place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the occupied/unceded/ seized territory of the _____ People." - "I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in _____, the ancestral and unceded territory of the _____ People." 	https://www.neefusa.org/guide-indigenous-land-acknowledgment
4	U.S. Department of Arts and Culture (USDAC)	A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgment: This guide provides suggested steps to acknowledging traditional land.	https://www.neefusa.org/guide-indigenous-land-acknowledgment

EXAMPLE TRAIL SIGNAGE STATEMENTS



Arizona has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples for over 10,000 years. Today, the Grand Canyon State is home to the Ak-Chin Indian Community (Ak-Chin O'odham); Cocopah Indian Tribe (Kwapa); Colorado River Indian Tribes (Mohave, Chemehuevi, Hopi and Navajo); Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation (Abaaja); Fort Mojave Tribe (Pipa Aha Macav); Gila River Indian Community (Akimel O'odham); Havasupai Tribe (Havasuw 'Baaja); Hopi Tribe (Hopi); Hualapai Tribe (Hualapai); Kaibab-Paiute Tribe (Kai'vi'vits); Navajo Nation (Diné); Pascua Yaqui Tribe (Yoeme); Pueblo of Zuni (A:shiwí); Quechan Tribe (Quechan); Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (Onk Akimel O'odham and Xalychidom Piipaash); San Carlos Apache Tribe (Nde); San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe (Kwaiantikowkets); Tohono O'odham Nation (Tohono O'odham); Tonto Apache Tribe (Te-go-suk); White Mountain Apache Tribe (N'dee); Yavapai-Apache Nation (Wipuhk'a'bah and Dil'zhe'e); and Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe (Wipuhk'a'bah).

Many segments of the Arizona Trail follow traditional footpaths, and every inch of the trail is considered native land.

For more details, visit <https://aztrail.org/the-trail/history/>.

TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The Rio Grande Trail Signs should be developed in consultation with local Tribal representatives and community leaders. Tribal outreach efforts involve requesting consultation and collaboration from tribal entities on trail signage elements and content including 1) Land Acknowledgements, 2) Cultural Resources and Indigenous Placenames, and 3) Interpretive Signs.

TRIBAL COMMUNITIES CORE VALUES

In outreach, communication, and engagement strategies with Tribal Communities, it is crucial to consider and internalize several key elements. First and foremost, Tribes and Pueblos are sovereign nations and the original inhabitants of this state. Their culture and governance embody the following core values:

- *Self-Determination and Sovereignty*
- *Respect*
- *Community & Generations*
- *Culture*
- *Stewardship and Environmental Sustainability*
- *Resiliency*

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

It is important that Government to Tribal Government interactions include formal invitations for review and feedback, as befits a sovereign entity. Emails and mailed correspondence are to be directed to leadership, tribal administration, and respective tribal departments. An official state entity should initiate discussions. Consultants can follow-up with the tribal leadership on behalf of the state or entity developing and installing the signage. Communications should be initiated for all signage elements and content that include 1) Land Acknowledgements, 2) Cultural Resources and Indigenous Placenames, and 3) Interpretive Signs.

OUTREACH PROTOCOLS

For certain sign types and content, it is essential to engage Tribal Communities and Indigenous Organizations to solicit input and meaningful feedback. Three stakeholder tiers have been identified for the engagement process on interpretive content for signage. Tier 1 consists of Tribal Governance organizations and Liaisons, Tier 2 includes individual Tribal Governments in close proximity to the trail and Rio Grande, and Tier 3 encompasses individual Tribal Governments within the State of New Mexico that hold significant cultural interests related to the areas traversed by the trail.

Tier 1 is recommended for primary engagement and communication. Tier 1 and Tier 2 are recommended for site specific placenames, cultural resources and interpretive content directly associated with the Rio Grande Trail. Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 are recommended for all signage elements and content more broadly referencing all Pueblos, Tribal Nations, and/or Indigenous land acknowledgement messages.

TIER #1 - TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS AND LIAISONS

- *New Mexico Department of Indian Affairs (<https://www.iad.state.nm.us/>)*
- *State of New Mexico Tribal Liaisons (<https://www.iad.nm.gov/programs/tribal-consultation-and-collaboration/tribal-liaisons/>)*
- *All Pueblo Council of Governors (<https://www.apcg.org/>)*
- *Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos (<https://www.fsipinc.org/>)*
- *Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council (<https://www.enipc.org/>)*
- *Southern Pueblos Agency (<https://www.bia.gov/regional-offices/southwest/southern-pueblos-agency>)*
- *Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (<https://indianpueblo.org/>)*

TIER #2 - PUEBLOS LOCATED ALONG RIO GRANDE

- *Pueblo de Cochiti*
- *Pueblo of Isleta*
- *Ohkay Owingeh*
- *Pueblo of San Felipe*
- *Pueblo de San Ildefonso*
- *Pueblo of Sandia*
- *Pueblo of Santa Ana*
- *Pueblo of Santa Clara*
- *Pueblo of Santo Domingo (Kewa)*
- *Pueblo of Taos*
- *Federally Unrecognized tribe: Tortugas Pueblo*
- *Federally Unrecognized tribe: Piro-Manso-Tiwa (PMT) Tribe*

TIER #3 - PUEBLOS AND TRIBAL NATIONS LOCATED AWAY FROM RIO GRANDE

- *Ft. Sill Apache Tribe*
- *Jicarilla Apache Nation*
- *Mescalero Apache Tribe*
- *Navajo Nation*
- *Pueblo of Acoma*
- *Pueblo of Jemez*
- *Pueblo of Laguna*
- *Pueblo of Nambé*
- *Pueblo of Picuris*
- *Pueblo of Pojoaque*
- *Pueblo of Tesuque*
- *Pueblo of Zia*
- *Pueblo of Zuni*

SIGN FABRICATION & MAINTENANCE

When fabricating wayfinding signs for outdoor recreation projects, selecting suitable materials and installation methods is crucial for ensuring durability, visibility, and overall effectiveness. Durable materials such as UV-resistant inks, rust-proof metals, and high-density polyethylene are essential to withstand diverse weather conditions and maintain sign integrity over time. To combat vandalism and wear, protective coatings and robust substrates, coupled with tamper-proof hardware, enhance resilience and longevity. Effective sign placement at key decision points maximizes visibility for all users, while stable foundations and mounting techniques ensure signs remain secure. Designing signs for easy maintenance and updates and incorporating sustainable practices further enhances the functionality and environmental alignment of wayfinding systems, ultimately improving the visitor experience and safety in outdoor recreation areas.

MATERIALS

Durability and Weather Resistance: One critical lesson in signage fabrication is the importance of choosing materials that can withstand diverse weather conditions. Materials such as UV-resistant inks, rust-proof metals (e.g., aluminum or stainless steel), and high-density polyethylene have proven effective in ensuring signs remain legible and intact over time. UV-resistant inks prevent fading caused by prolonged sun exposure, while rust-proof metals resist corrosion, extending the sign's lifespan. High-density polyethylene is favored for its resistance to both impact and environmental stressors.

Vandalism and Wear Resistance: Signs in outdoor settings are often subject to vandalism and natural wear and tear. To mitigate these risks, applying protective coatings or laminates can significantly enhance the resilience of the sign surface. Anti-graffiti coatings, for instance, allow for easier removal of paint and markers, maintaining the sign's appearance and functionality. Additionally, selecting robust substrates and securing signs with tamper-proof hardware further deters vandalism and ensures longevity.

Appropriate Materials

- HIGH-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE (HDPE):**
Advantages: Durable, UV-resistant, and weather-resistant.
Uses: Commonly used for signs in parks and nature trails.
- ALUMINUM:**
Advantages: Lightweight, strong, corrosion-resistant, and UV-resistant.
Uses: Suitable for a variety of outdoor signage applications, including traffic signs.
- FIBERGLASS REINFORCED PLASTIC (FRP):**
Advantages: Extremely durable, UV-resistant, and
- can withstand harsh weather conditions.*
Uses: Ideal for high-wind areas and long-lasting outdoor signs.
- PVC (POLYVINYL CHLORIDE):**
Advantages: Weather-resistant and UV-stable with a long lifespan.
Uses: Suitable for signs that are not exposed to extreme conditions but still need durability.
- STAINLESS STEEL:**
Advantages: Extremely strong, weather-resistant, and corrosion-resistant.
Uses: Best for high-wind areas where structural integrity is crucial.
Installation Methods

Appropriate Colors

- HIGH-CONTRAST COLORS:**
Examples: Black text on a white background, white text on a dark background (e.g., dark blue, black, or green).
Advantages: Enhances readability from a distance and in varying light conditions.
- REFLECTIVE OR RETRO-REFLECTIVE:**
Uses: Improves visibility in low light conditions, such as dawn, dusk, and night.
- MATTE FINISHES:**
Advantages: Reduces glare from the sun, making the sign easier to read in bright conditions.

Foundation and Mounting Techniques: The stability of sign installations heavily depends on the chosen foundation and mounting techniques. For permanent signs, concrete footings are often necessary to anchor the signposts securely, preventing them from shifting or toppling due to wind, vandalism, or accidental impact. When installing signs in areas with loose or sandy soil, deeper footings or additional stabilization methods (like using larger bases or anchoring systems) may be required to ensure durability.

Maintenance Considerations: Designing signs with maintenance and updates in mind can significantly reduce long-term costs and effort. Modular sign systems, where individual panels can be easily replaced or updated, offer a practical solution for dynamic environments where information may change periodically. Quick-release mounting brackets and standardized parts facilitate swift repairs or replacements without requiring specialized tools or skills.

Sustainable Practices:

Incorporating sustainable practices in both materials selection and installation methods is increasingly recognized as vital. Utilizing recycled or eco-friendly materials not only reduces environmental impact but also aligns with the conservation goals of many outdoor recreation projects. Furthermore, adopting installation techniques that minimize ground disturbance and preserve the natural landscape supports broader environmental stewardship objectives.



SIGN FABRICATION & MAINTENANCE

LOCAL FABRICATION

The following table details a list of local sign fabricators and design firms. This is not a comprehensive list and additional research should be conducted to find an appropriate fabricator if necessary.

County	Community	Name	Type of Service	Website	Contact
Taos	Village of Taos	Acorn Graphics	Architectural, commercial, personal drawing design	https://www.acorngraphicstaos.com/drawings.html	575-758-0469
		Cisneros Sheetmetal Works	Sheet-metal signage		575-758-9271
Rio Arriba	Española	Meyer's Steel Design - Art and Custom Plasma cutting	Custom steel signage	http://www.meyerssteeldesign.com/	505-927-3314
Santa Fe	City of Santa Fe	Artman Productions, LLC	Printed signs, banners, 3D architectural signage	https://artmanproductions.com/	505-820-2871
		Signs Today	Customs signage, building signage	http://signssantafe.net/	505-982-9595
Sandoval	City of Rio Rancho	Deluxe Design	Exterior signage various materials and applications	https://www.deluxedesign.com/products/	505-892-8090
Bernalillo	Los Ranchos	Sightworks	Exterior signage, various materials and applications	https://sightworksexhibits.com/	505-842-5220
	Albuquerque	Salteydogg METAL FAB	Custom Signage, Powder Coating, Heat Treating, Sheet Metal, CNC Punching	http://www.salteydogg.com/	505-244-3644
		Fast Signs	Exterior signage, various materials and applications	https://www.fastsigns.com/northeast-albuquerque-nm/	505-339-2031
		Zeon Signs	Pylon, monument, hi-rise, neon, channel letters, Cabinet Signs	https://www.zeonsignsnm.com/	505-243-3771
Valencia	City of Belen	Paul's Son Sign	Sheet metal and Vinyl Signage		505-864-4141
Socorro	City of Socorro	Lucky Signs	ADA, Vinyl, Wood Signs	http://www.lucky-signs.com/	575-854-2264

County	Community	Name	Type of Service	Website	Contact
Dona Ana	Las Cruces	Sign Design	Channel Letters, Monument, Digital, CNC Dimensional	https://isigndesign.com/gallery-of-signs	915-485-7446
		Lee Sign Co.	Sandblasted Flagstone Signs	https://www.leeesignco.com/gallery	575-259-3698
		Able Sign Co.	Exterior signage, various materials and applications	https://www.ablesignco.com/	575-525-1015

DEFINITIONS

The Definitions section offers a glossary of key terms pertinent to this Signage Guide. It provides precise explanations of terms used within this guide, acknowledging that their usage and interpretation may differ from those adopted by other agencies and organizations.

ADA Requirements: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities. ADA standards for signage guarantee that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else. In the context of this plan, the ADA describes these standards.

ASHTO Requirements: The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (ASHTO) supplies guidance for the design of roadways, including signage. For the purposes of this plan, ASHTO requirements are relevant to sign spacing and placement adjacent to bicycle facilities.

Directional Signs: Directional signs describe mile markers, fingerboard signs, confirmation signs, and turn signs.

Elements: Sign elements or components describe any content on the sign face, including text, logos, or images, among others.

Interpretive Signs: Interpretive signs, also called Interpretive Panel, refer to signs that are educational displays designed to provide visitors with information about a specific location's natural, cultural, historical, or ecological significance. These signs aim to enhance the visitor experience by offering insights and stories that foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the area.

MUTCD: The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices is a document published by the Federal Highway Administration. The MUTCD defines the standards for traffic control devices on all streets and other facilities open to public travel. The State of New Mexico has adopted the national MUTCD standards.

Primary Signs: Primary signs in the context of this Guide include sign kiosks and large panel kiosks.

Project: The term "Project" is used as a placeholder throughout the document on sign graphics to refer to a trail, facility, campground, park or any other project that signage might be developed for.

Secondary Signs: Secondary signs in the context of this Guide include Site ID sign and Map Panel.

Sign Face: The sign face is the front surface of a sign where information is displayed.